DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 473 797 CS 511 782

TITLE	Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (85th, Miami, Florida, August 5-8, 2002). Cultural and Critical Studies Division.
PUB DATE	2002-08-00
NOTE	447p.; For other sections of these proceedings, see CS 511 769-787.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Proceedings (021) -- Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC18 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome; Advertising; Critical Theory; Editorials; Electronic Mail; Females; Feminism; Higher Education; *Internet; *Journalism Education; *Mass Media Role; Media Coverage; *Newspapers; Sexuality; *Television
IDENTIFIERS	Africa; *Cultural Studies; India; Journalists; Korea; Newsgroups; September 11 Terrorist Attacks 2001; Zines

ABSTRACT

The Cultural and Critical Studies Division of the proceedings contains the following 15 papers: "'Mourning in America': Ritual, Redemption, and Recovery in News Narrative after September 11th" (Carolyn Kitch); "Inequality of Resources: The Crisis of Media Conglomeration and the Case for Reform" (Brian Houston); "Buying Love: Sex on Television, Consumption, and Advanced Capitalism" (Laramie Taylor); "The Site of Coverage: The Impact of Internet-Mounted Social Movement Protests on Journalists' Coverage Decisions" (Sonora Jha-Nambiar); "If a Problem Cannot Be Solved, Enlarge It: An Ideological Critique of the Other in Pearl Harbor and September 11 'New York Times' Coverage" (Bonnie Brennen and Margaret Duffy); "But Where are the Clothes? The Pornographic Stereotype in Mainstream American Fashion Advertising" (Debra Merskin); "'Viva Women': Dialogue Between the Lived Experience of Past Struggle and Present Hopes" (Bongsoo Park); "Goddess Worship: Commodified Feminism and Spirituality on nikegoddess.com" (Tara M. Kachgal); "Shifting Identities, Creating New Paradigms: Analyzing the Narratives of Women Online Journalists" (Shayla Thiel); "'Deviance' & Discourse: How Readers Respond to One Man's Editorial. A Framing Analysis of E-Mails following the September 11th Attacks" (Laura K. Smith); "Complicating Communication: Revisiting and Revising Production/ Consumption" (James Hamilton and Tonya Couch); "Joseph Conrad's 'Heart of Darkness', and 'The New York Times' Narratives of HIV/AIDS in Africa: A Continuum of 'Ideologeme of Imperial Contagion' or a Co-Incidence?" (Chinedu O. Eke); "Writing in the Wind: Recreating Oral Culture in an Online Community" (Chuck Hays); "Hands-On Communication: The Rituals Limitations of Web Publishing in the Alternative Zine Community" (Jennifer Rauch); and "Grappling with Gendered Modernity: The Spectacle of Miss World in the News" (Radhika E. Parameswaran). (RS)

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"Mourning in America":

Ritual, Redemption, and Recovery in News Narrative after September 11th

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for presentation at the 2002 Annual Conference

"Mourning in America":

Ritual, Redemption, and Recovery in News Narrative after September 11th

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75-WORD ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the construction of "the story of September 11th" in American newsmagazines. Drawing on anthropological as well as narrative theory, it argues that news coverage contained the elements of a funeral ritual, providing a forum for national mourning and creating a cohesive story in which vulnerability and fear became heroism and patriotic pride. It further contends that journalism plays a central role in American civil religion and in the articulation of national identity.

"Mourning in America":

Ritual, Redemption, and Recovery in News Narrative after September 11th

> Grief and love, rage and vengefulness, pride and defiance—a volatile set of emotions was let loose in America last week. They can be dangerous, but they can also be constructive. It hardly seems possible, or even fitting, to imagine that some good could come out of such horror. But it is not out of reach.
>
> —"We Shall Overcome," *Newsweek*, September 24, 2001[1]

> So much that was precious has died, but as though in a kind of eternal promise, something new has been born. We are seeing it in our nation and sensing it in ourselves, a new faith in our oldest values, a rendezvous with grace . . . .
>
> —"Life on the Home Front," *Time*, October 1, 2001[2]

The events of September 11th provided an unprecedented political, social, logistical, and spiritual challenge to Americans. They also provided a narrative challenge for news media faced with the task of explaining the seemingly inexplicable. Yet during the first few weeks after the disaster, a set of themes emerged through which Americans "understood" what had happened. Those themes included courage, sacrifice, faith, redemption, resolve, and patriotism. They emerged within a cultural narrative that was told in schools and churches, in businesses and town meetings. That narrative also was told in national news media—which in fact were central to its content and articulation.

This paper traces and analyzes the construction of this story in newsweekly magazine issues published during the first month after the attacks. It argues that by the end of this period, "the story" of September 11th had a clear shape, a set of "lessons," and a form of closure. This narrative was conveyed through civic ceremonies and political rhetoric within the broader American culture that is "covered" by news media. Yet news media were the primary forum for the telling of the story on a national scale. They made possible a national sharing of grief and affirmation of patriotic values after the attacks.

In his recent book on cultural responses to the Oklahoma City bombing, historian Edward Linenthal notes that "a nationwide bereaved community . . . is one of the only ways Americans can imagine themselves as one; being 'together' with millions of others through expressions of mourning bypasses or transcends the many ways in which people are divided—by religion, by ideology, by class, by region, by race, by gender."[3] When a disaster occurs, such communion can be achieved only through news media, which can create, if only temporarily, a feeling of national consensus.

This study—which includes a total of twenty issues of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U. S. News & World Report*—analyzes the ways in which news media helped to create that consensus by conducting what was, in effect, a national funeral ceremony that provided meaning and consolation. It also considers how news narratives provided a framework for journalists and audiences alike to understand an event that at first seemed incomprehensible, shifting the broader "story" of the event from vulnerability and grief to strength and pride.

The Theoretical Context for this Study: Narrative, Ritual, and Ceremony in News

The analysis provided in this paper draws on communication theory about the role of narrative and ritual in journalism. It also draws on sociological and anthropological theory about the role of civil religion in American society and the components of the funeral ritual.

A significant amount of communication scholarship has discussed the narrative nature and social functions of journalism.[4] Such work considers the role of journalism not just in conveying information, but also in providing explanation and reassurance in cases of upsetting news. It also examines the role of journalism in unifying readers into a national community and articulating and affirming group values and identity. As this body of literature contends, journalists perform these functions through the use of symbolism and storytelling, devices that allow them to place the facts of even shocking events into recognizable frameworks; they present the news as a story in which (to borrow the words of historian Hayden White) "events seem to tell themselves."[5] In this model, David Eason explains, news "is not a string of unrelated facts but a symbolic structure in which facts function to disclose a larger meaning."[6]

Dan Berkowitz has found that narrativization is part of newsroom culture: "Through experience and interaction with others in the news organization, newsworkers develop a mental catalogue of news story themes, including how the 'plot' will actually unravel and who the key actors are likely to be."[7] Robert Karl Manoff contends that "[j]ournalists have always been aware of this . . . Narratives bring order to events by making them something that can be told about; they have power because they make the world make sense."[8]

Stories of tragedy in particular require "a narrative framework that adheres to the requisites of dramatic unity and plot development," note Steve Barkin and Michael Gurevitch.[9] These stories also tend to employ "characters" and cultural symbols who are familiar to audiences. In 1995, the newsweeklies' coverage of the Oklahoma City bombing included photos of mourners at memorial services and of flower-and-candle shrines; portrait-style photographs of the dead; survivor testimonies; expressions of vengeance against the perpetrators; and, in subsequent issues, with reader letters expressing condolences and solidarity.[10] At that time, all of these aspects of coverage already were a part of the newsweeklies' formula for covering the deaths of famous people.[11] All of them would resurface in their coverage of September 11th.

The inclusion of such elements within coverage of the broader "story" of a tragedy (as well as the use of narrative writing style within individual articles) allows journalism to extend its basic function of "uncovering the unknown" to include "clarifying and interpreting the known," for audiences who "need not only to know but to understand."[12] In these instances, journalism performs not just a communicative function, but also a ceremonial function that helps to unify a society at key moments.[13]

A special issue of the journal *Religion in the News* claimed that the nature of news coverage after September 11th was proof of the importance of religion in society and of its legitimacy as a newsworthy topic.[14] Yet while they surely were covering religious ceremonies and sentiments, news media themselves also enacted those ceremonies and conveyed those sentiments. Their handling of this particular story served as one of the clearest (and most literal) examples of James Carey's "ritual view" of journalism that "centers on the sacred ceremony that draws persons together in fellowship and commonality."[15] Journalists were participating in what sociologists call "civil religion," a phenomenon first described by Emile Durkheim. He claimed that "[t]here can be no society which does not feel the need of upholding and reaffirming at regular intervals the collective sentiments and the collective ideas which make its unity and its personality," and that there is little difference between "the processes employed to attain these results" and "regular religious ceremonies."[16] Like "regular" ceremonies, civil religion relies on rituals, especially in times of social crisis. Religion scholar Frederick Bird explains that rituals

> provide spoken and embodied vocabularies for communicating
> and reconfirming intense feelings of respect, awe, sorrow,

> loyalty, tenderness and attraction . . . Without these ritual forms, persons often find it difficult to communicate these sentiments not only because they may spend excessive efforts at controlling and limiting their feelings on account of their intensity but also because they may also feel inarticulate at arriving at their own personal expressions. Ironically, ritual codes because of their stylized form seem to facilitate greater articulateness . . . .[17]

This paper assesses the role of journalism within the public rituals that occurred after the national tragedy of September 11th, including their use of secular symbols and familiar plots that have a shared cultural meaning for a national community of mourners. It argues that news media not only covered, but conducted a public funeral ceremony following what anthropologists identify as the three stages of "transition rituals": separation, transformation (or liminality), and aggregation.[18] In this theory, the first stage is the initial tear in the fabric of society that the death creates, and the resulting shock and disbelief. The second stage is a transitional time when the wound is still raw, when anger and uncertainty upset the social order, when social values are challenged and debated, and yet when answers and healing are sought. The third stage is a reforming of society with renewal of faith in social values and a commitment to get on with life as a group. Much of the mourning process occurs during the second stage, a "liminal" period in which social hierarchy is replaced by what Victor Turner calls "communitas." He explains that that liminality "can be seen as potentially a period of scrutinization of the central values and axioms of the culture in which it occurs."[19] According to Arnold van Gennep, this examination leads to the third stage, "reunit[ing] all the surviving members of the group."[20]

Cheryl Jorgensen-Earp and Lori Lanzilotti, who studied the "spontaneous shrines" created by mourners at Oklahoma City and Dunblane, Scotland (where schoolchildren were shot), explain that, although mass media have desensitized the public to the violence of death, "occasionally a particular tragedy will break through the feeling of mediated unreality . . . Under such conditions, the deaths of strangers can seem more real than deaths in the local community. For a brief time, a sense of national community is formed and individuals feel both the grief that is often repressed in personal contexts and a need to actively respond."[21] They argue that "[d]uring liminal periods . . . there exist 'seedbeds of cultural creativity,' in Victor Turner's phrase, where we search for new forms of meaning but ground them in the cultural shorthand of images and themes that provided comfort in the past."[22]

This was precisely the nature of much of the news coverage of September 11th during the weeks following the attacks, and that coverage corresponded to the ritual stages of a public funeral. Of course, the funeral is more than just a metaphor for news coverage of September 11th: some of the coverage was of actual funerals, and in a broader sense, the World Trade Center became (and still is) an actual grave, to which visitors have come to lay flowers and light candles. This study uses the format of the funeral service merely as a useful theoretical model for understanding the ritual functions of news.

The Evidence and Methodology

Hannah Arendt wrote that "[t]he whole factual world of human affairs depends for its reality and its continued existence, first, upon the presence of others who have seen and heard and will remember, and, second, on the transformation of the intangible into the tangibility of things."[23] Like candles, flowers, flag pins, and poems and drawings taped to park fences, magazines helped to accomplish this reification of emotions (as well as communication of information). Because of their physical permanence, their ability to display photographs effectively, and their editorial techniques—their editors' direct address to readers, their frequent use of narrative, and their acknowledged points of view—magazines are a medium especially well suited to mourning and meaning-making.

Since their foundings, the newsweeklies have openly engaged in not only reporting, but also interpretation and explanation through narrative. The debut issue of *Newsweek* included a promotional advertisement explaining that the magazine "is an indispensable complement to newspaper reading, because it explains, expounds, clarifies."[24] On *Time*'s 25th anniversary in 1948, its editors claimed to "tell the news through the actions, characters, and motives of people."[25] The magazines also have long considered themselves national leaders and "celebrants" of the nation. *Time*'s editors have described the magazine as the "keeper of a certain American self-image" and "a moral counselor" to the nation; in 1998, another anniversary year, its company president claimed that "[p]erhaps more than any other publication, it has watched, wept, and sung about the extraordinary people and events of the past 75 years."[26]

These newsweekly magazines are the focus of this study. The evidence comes from a total of twenty issues of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U. S. News & World Report*, including: all regular weekly issues published by the three magazines during the month following the attack (issues dated September 24th, October 1st, October 8th, and October 15th)[27]; all special issues published by the magazines in addition to their weekly schedules (*Time* published one such issue, and *Newsweek* and *U. S. News & World Report* each published two; some were dated and some were not); and the yearend-summary double issues published by all three magazines.

This study offers a narrative analysis—considering structure, language, and emphases in content and presentation—of this journalistic coverage. It pays particular attention to the newsweeklies' use of cultural symbolism within each issue, as well as to the recurrence of symbols and the nature and structure of the broader narrative the newsmagazines told over time. The analysis includes all text and photographs in these issues, including reader letters. (The magazines received thousands of letters after the tragedy—*Newsweek* noted that it alone received 2,000 per week during the time period covered by this study[28]—and, as will be discussed below, reader letters played an important role in the story's closure.) The "funeral" period defined for purposes of this study is the first month after attack. The magazines' yearend issues also were analyzed, though, in order to compare the writers' and editors' highsight, three months later, on the meaning of the attack with the way the story had "ended" in mid-October.

Stage One: Separation: "I Saw Things No One Should See"

The newsweeklies' design choices signalled the gravity of the news of September 11th—and the start of a funeral ritual. In their special editions published just three days after the attacks, both *Time* and *Newsweek* substituted black for their standard use of red on their covers (on *Time*, the cover border, and on *Newsweek*, the banner behind its logo), and all three magazines used black backgrounds for their pages. (Indeed, from their first special issues through their yearend issues, *Time* and *Newsweek* continued to set apart their coverage of the disaster and its military aftermath with funereal page-design devices, *Time* using black-and-grey striped side borders and *Newsweek* running a black banner across the tops of pages.) These design choices were just one aspect of the role of visual communication in news coverage of the events and their aftermath. Photojournalism played a key role in the news media's ability to "witness" the tragedy.

Bearing witness and giving testimony occurred during the first stage of coverage, which corresponded with what anthropologists call separation—the first stage of the funeral, which is the loss of the dead and the resulting rift in the social order.[29] News coverage of a disaster begins by expressing shock and disbelief, yet also by documenting this rift with detailed testimony, some of it verbal and much of it visual.

Time's first special issue,[30] published three days after the attacks, consisted primarily of photographs. They showed the second plane hitting the towers, the towers burning, people falling from buildings, the towers imploding, bleeding victims running down streets, firefighters at the scene, debris scattered across the ground, bodies on stretchers, the faces of bystanders as they witnessed the disaster, the remaining shards of the towers after their collapse. This first edition contained just two articles, one of them opening alongside a photo of the shocked and tearful faces of Iowa schoolchildren watching television coverage.

Newsweek's first issue, also a special issue,[31] contained many of the same documentary photos, and the same set of subjects and themes. Like those in *Time*, photographs in *U. S. News & World Report*'s first issue[32]—showing Manhattanites on the street, looking upward in horror—served to witness the act of witnessing. In her study of the role of photojournalism in Holocaust memory, Barbie Zelizer writes that "[t]his aesthetic—showing witnesses without evidence of the atrocities—forced attention on the act of bearing witness. It froze the act of bearing witness in time and space, inviting readers to attend to what was being witnessed even if it was not shown."[33] As part of a newsmagazine, this process of witnessing witnesses involved the reader as well as the photographer, becoming a triple act of bearing witness to the horror.

Newsweek included a report it characterized as "dispatches from the front," with a title drawn from one survivor's quote: "I Saw Things No One Should See."[34] This was one of several articles in the newsmagazines in which survivors and close observers provided eyewitness accounts. In some cases, journalists themselves reported in the form of testimony, such as in these two separate articles in the Washington, DC-based *U. S. News & World Report*, filed by reporters who had happened to be in New York: "I sprinted down 27 flights of stairs, in an eerily quiet stairwell, my heart pounding. The lobby teemed with people, some injured, some seeking shelter, others, like me, preparing to flee"[35]; "A man told me to stay near walls. Looking up at the north tower, the one still standing, I imagined a nightmarish scenario: A collapsing building could kill me and the others in an instant."[36]

Yet most testimony in news coverage came from non-journalists and was printed in phrases that, if not verbatim, had the rough feel of immediate confession: "I saw it all, I saw it all. I ran. I saw people lying on the street screaming. One man had his face slashed open. There were little children. I didn't stop to help them. My only thought was to save myself"; "All I could see was all the fire and smoke and bits of building and paper floating around like confetti. As I watched, I saw 15 or 20 people literally jump out of their windows and fall to their deaths"; "Then the smoke cloud swallowed us all. We could barely breathe. I had ashes in my mouth."[37]

U. S. News & World Report noted that the need to "testify" extended beyond survivors and witnesses and was part of the nation's initial disbelief: "Americans talked and talked, struggling to make sense of the carnage. They jammed phone lines, spoke to neighbors over backyard fences, sent emails, gathered around televisions in bars . . . they used words to try to make sense of the senseless."[38] The newsmagazines themselves followed this urge. Their articles journalistically reported the day, yet (even if they were written in a more polished way) they had the same general tone of shock, anger, and uncertainty as did quotes from witnesses.

Time writer Nancy Gibbs wrote: "If you want to humble an empire it makes sense to maim its cathedrals. They are symbols of its faith, and when they crumple and burn, it tells us we are not so powerful and we can't be safe." She asked, "Do we now panic, or will we be brave?"[39] In a back-page essay for the same magazine (the special issue published three days after the attacks), columnist Lance Morrow used what were perhaps the strongest words in all of the newsweekly coverage: "For once, let's have no fatuous rhetoric about 'healing.' . . America needs to relearn a lost discipline, self-confident relentlessness—and to relearn why human nature has equipped us all with a weapon (abhorred in decent peacetime societies) called hatred."[40]

Such anger, unusual in news coverage, is not unusual in grief, and it is part of the transition from the first stage of the funeral ritual to the second—the transformation, or liminal, period, when mourning rituals occur and when the social order is, if only briefly, disrupted. It is in this second stage of such a story that news media are most likely to openly participate in civil religion and to turn from the language of reporting to the language of grief. In this middle period, which was represented primarily in the newsweeklies' second week of coverage, journalistic reporting gave way to mourning and to the same kinds of textual and visual content that are symbolically central to the funeral itself.

Stage Two: Transformation (Liminality): "Lamenting Day by Day"

Anthropologist Jack Goody noted that "the funeral is often an inquest as well as an interment, a pointer to revenge."[41] Morrow's angry essay in *Time* was not the only example of newsmagazine content that conveyed this need for revenge against a villain. Reader letters printed in the magazines' second week of regular coverage echoed his point and tone: "Osama Bin Laden, you are a coward . . . It is time we ended your reign of terror"; "It takes a lot to get us mad, but once you do, we do not rest until we have extracted the last ounce of retribution. Osama bin Laden, Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman, Hizbullah, Hamas, the Taliban, Iran, Iraq, and all the rest, you are on notice—your days are numbered."[42] Both *Time* and *Newsweek* used head shots of Bin Laden in which he either was in a red light or the photo was digitally changed to make him appear red, like a devil; *Newsweek* used such an image, closely cropped, as its cover. *U. S. News & World Report* also used his face as its second-week cover subject, underneath the crosshairs of a rifle sight.[43]

In their own language and in the quotes that filled the pages of the newsmagazines' second issues, angry statements were also made within ones expressing religious faith or resolve. *Time*'s cover story printed the lyrics of a hymn sung at the memorial service in Washington's National Cathedral: "And though this world, with devils filled,/Should threaten to undo us,/We will not fear, for God hath willed/His truth to triumph through us."[44] The article's writer claimed: "In a week when everything seemed to happen for the first time ever, the candle became a weapon of war . . . for the rest of us who are not soldiers and have no cruise missiles, we had candles, and we lit them on Friday night in an act of mourning, and an act of war."[45] Such writing wove the desire for retribution into the mourning process.

Accompanying the article was a double-page spread of hundreds of people in an Illinois town holding candles in the air at a nighttime memorial service. The second-week issues of the newsmagazines included many photographs of spontaneously-created shrines—at the sites of the attacks and elsewhere across the country—consisting of candles, flowers, and pictures of the dead. These photographs were documentation of democratic, civil-religious behavior that occurs not only after disasters, but also at the sites of war memorials, a process that historian John Bodnar calls "an expression of comradeship with and sorrow for the dead" and that David

Chidester and Edward Linenthal call "ritual relations between the living and the dead that form such an important part of a national patriotic faith."[46]

The newsmagazines joined in this process, intertwining their representations of Americans' spontaneous services with their own funereal gestures. The *Time* cover story's title, "Mourning in America," ran across three pages (including a pullout page) and over a photograph of firefighters carrying a flag-draped corpse out of the World Trade Center wreckage; on the other side of this pullout page was a photo of posters showing pictures of the missing people (in effect, a triple act of portraiture), hung on a "wall of prayers."[47] In its "Commemorative Issue," published just over a week after the attacks, *Newsweek* published brief obituaries of forty-one victims, with photos of them or their surviving relatives (some of them holding up photographs or posters showing the victims). *Time* also published brief obituaries of victims, and *Newsweek*'s second regularly-dated issue of coverage provided anecdotes or relatives' and friends' quotes about the dead.[48] That issue also included a photo of a fire-company window display of portraits of eleven missing firefighters. Inside the station window, on either side of the pictures, were flowers and the American flag; on the outside, visitors had taped handwritten notes of thanks and tribute (as well as an illustration of Christ) to the display.[49]

Time's second dated issue of coverage closed with a photoessay, by its distinguished staff photographer James Nachtwey, consisting of full-page and double-page images. Together, they conveyed a situation still emotionally and politically unresolved: a bonds trader, wearing his usual jacket but an American-flag tie, standing dejected on Wall Street; yellow ribbons tied to a fence along the Hudson River; messages (including "Never Again," "Feel the Pain," "God Bless Us All") written in chalk on the pavement of a New York City park; a firefighter's face shown on the Sony Jumbotron above Times Square; and the revised skyline of lower Manhattan seen through the bars of a fence at twilight.[50] This issue closed with a back-page photo—the journalistic last word of this issue—titled "Farewell" and showing a rear view of two firefighters standing on either side of a flag-draped coffin on a fire truck as it led a funeral procession through Manhattan; a black banner on the back of the truck read, "We Will Never Forget."[51]

This sort of visual eulogy was as ceremonial, religious, and patriotic as it was reportorial, and it was an important component of the newsmagazines' second stage of coverage, a way of providing visual tribute and consolation when words still seemed insufficient. The words that *were* included in these middle-stage issues included expressions of condolence from world political leaders and of consolation from religious leaders.[52] The latter addressed the social precariousness of liminality: "'The greatest memorial is not to be afraid'" (The Rev. Calvin Butts, Abyssinian Baptist Church, Manhattan); "'evil and death do not have the final say'" (Pope John Paul II); "'if we meet negativity with negativity, rage with rage, attack with attack, what then will be the outcome?'" (the Dalai Lama).[53] *Newsweek*'s obituaries of the dead began with an introduction quoting poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow: "'The friends who leave us do not feel the sorrow/Of parting, as we feel it, who must stay/Lamenting day by day.'"[54]

That *Newsweek* introduction, however, also used poet W. H. Auden's phrase "'let the healing fountain start,'" much as *Time* had included part of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's poem *Ulysses*: "'Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'/We are not now that strength which in old days/Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are.'"[55] Healing and resolution were mixed in with the sorrow of this ceremonial coverage.

Newsweek's "Commemorative Issue" was published around the same time as the magazine's second dated issue containing the passage above. Perhaps because it was a glossy, book-like issue meant to be saved as a keepsake, more than any other issue in this study it combined themes of mourning and recovery. This transitional function was suggested in the opening letter from the company chairman, who explained, "This Special Issue of *Newsweek* commemorates the spirit of America."[56] It also was suggested by the two items most often featured in its many photographs: lit candles and American flags. The candles were a symbol of grief (separation), while the flags were a symbol of patriotism (aggregation). Together, they represented the middle stage of the civil-religious ceremony conducted in America and in American journalism after September 11th. Yet the dominant symbol by far was the flag, and it was through a patriotic theme that the newsweeklies moved to a resolution of the story.

Stage Three: Aggregation: "A New Faith in Our Oldest Values"

As a number of scholars have contended,[57] when a tragedy is perceived as distinctly national in nature, the flag takes on a civil-religious status. The bold and repeated use of this image on the covers and pages of the newsweeklies was part of a national ceremony that was conducted inside and beyond news media. It included news media in the ritual of flag display outside homes and businesses across the country.

Twenty photographs showing the flag—including the cover photo of a little girl waving one—appeared in *Newsweek*'s "Commemorative Issue" alone, which contained an article claiming that "if we've learned nothing else this year, we know that the idea represented by the flag can never be taken from us. The terrorists attacked the heart of the nation. They murdered more civilians in one day than ever in our history. But they failed utterly in their goal of destroying the spirit of this country."[58] For their issues dated September 24th—their second (and first regularly-dated) issues after the attacks—all three of the newsweeklies used the American flag on their covers. The letters in the normally-red logo of *Time* were red, white, blue, and black, drawing further attention to the flag held aloft by President George Bush in the cover photo. *U. S. News & World Report* and *Newsweek* used cover photos of firemen raising flags, the latter one soon becoming the most widely-circulated image of the patriotic-recovery narrative.[59]

All of the September 24th issues (as well as *Newsweek*'s "Commemorative Issue") also profiled and praised the "heroes," including survivors and firefighters, who had made sacrifices and showed what *U. S. News & World Report* called, in one title, "Courage Under Terrible Fire."[60] This shift of focus from victims to heroes helped to effect a transition from death to life, and it coincided with the rhetorical shift from shock to sorrow to patriotism. The story of heroes was a story of hope rather than despair, and heroism and hope were described as aspects of the unalterable American character. As *Newsweek*'s "Commemorative Issue" put it,

> In the aftermath of September 11, it became fashionable to say, "Nothing will ever be the same." That isn't true. The hyperbole is understandable: the sudden sacrifice of thousands of lives seemed to demand a corresponding measure of sacrifice among the rest of us. Sacrifices there will be, as the president has made clear. But not the sacrifice of America's essential spirit or its way of life. There are many strands in the national fiber. Bold ones like heroism and solidarity and sense of purpose, which were on such impressive display after the attack. And also more modest ones, like individuality, humor, frivolity and fun. These more playful American traits may be on temporary furlough. But they will be back, and soon, because terrorists could not possibly destroy them. America is getting back to normal . . . .[61]

In the following week of coverage (dated October 1st), *Time*'s cover story took up this theme while continuing the patriotic thread, beginning, "Everyone needs a well of hope." Its title, "Life on the Home Front," alluded to wartime, and its conclusion invoked the democratic ideals of earlier American patriots: "when a free people who invented the idea of liberty as a form of government rediscovers its power, there is no telling where it might go."[62]

In their third regularly-dated issues after the attacks, all three newsmagazines, while retaining themes of witnessing and mourning, looked forward to recovery. *Time*'s cover story was illustrated by a photograph of visitors taking pictures at the World Trade Center site (yet another triple act of witnessing when it included the reader),[63] and its title asked, "What Comes Next?"[64] *U. S. News & World Report* noted that "the flag flew at full staff again last week, marking the end of the nation's official mourning period. The ghostly seven-story shell of the World Trade Center was removed amid talk of rebuilding. And *Late Show* host David Letterman poked fun at New York City, untouchable turf just two weeks ago."[65] *Newsweek* contained a report on what sort of memorial might be built for the World Trade Center victims and ran a double-page-spread photo of hundreds of Broadway actors and actresses filling Times Square and singing for the filming of a New York tourism ad called "Let's Go On With the Show."[66] The issue also profiled families struggling to make ends meet after the death of a breadwinner, reporting serious problems but concluding with a quote from one widower: "'But I have faith in America. We'll pull through this as a country . . . .' The writer of this story had the last word, declaring: "A nation wishes them Godspeed."[67]

By their fourth regularly-dated issues, there were indications in all of the newsweeklies that—while the ongoing war would remain news for some time—the "story" of the tragedy was coming to a close. *Time*'s double-page photo of "The Site" now razed (an image that served both as news coverage and as a tribute)[68] was the only reference to the New York aspects of the tragedy; the rest of the issue focused on the war and the possibility of future acts of terrorism, as did the other magazines.[69] Only 20 pages in *U. S. News & World Report* were about the attack and war, and, perhaps more tellingly, they were followed by a 45-page special section (with correspondingly-themed advertisements) on online education; ***Newsweek***'s issue the same week contained a 26-page "special advertising section" on "Fall Health & Fitness."[70] The newsmagazines were back to business as usual.

Yet the closing of the story did not seem to be merely a construction of journalism; it seemed to be endorsed by "Americans" as well. Through their coverage, the newsweeklies had extensively featured anecdotes about, photographs of, and quotes from ordinary people like the readers—victims, survivors, witnesses, and mourners whose stories fit into the narrative evolving from despair to hope. And it was non-journalists who were allowed to pronounce closure. These three reader letters, which echoed the patriotic and religious rhetoric of the magazines' own coverage, were printed in issues dated October 15th, closing the first full month of coverage:

> Those who are working in the rubble teach us daily lessons in true grit. I will learn them. In the name of the fallen, I will walk justly, fear no evil and continue to sing America's songs.
>
> What a wonderful photo you [printed] . . . depict[ing] two firefighters standing near where the World Trade Center towers once stood. Their silhouettes against the New York skies symbolize the strength of the American people. Even under the most horrific circumstances, such as the terrible tragedy that has befallen this country, even in sorrow, Americans will

> courageously stand tall, ready to help those in need.
>
> [from a New Yorker:] America needs to know that, for all the carnage, New York has not been brought to its knees. Like all families after a funeral, it's getting on with life. Sadder, inevitably, and with indelible memories of the tragedy, but nonetheless moving ahead. New York and America will survive.[71]

The Broader Narrative and the Yearend Issues

The newsmagazines contained acknowledgements that they were telling a story with a beginning, middle, and end. In the last week of coverage discussed in this paper, *Newsweek* reprinted its previous three covers (of regularly-dated weekly issues)—showing, respectively, the firefighters raising the flag at the World Trade Center site, the red-tinged face of Osama bin Laden, and a cover story on preparing for chemical warfare—with the caption: "Chronicling terror and recovery: From the attacks to the probe to the road ahead."[72] All of the *Time* cover stories discussed here were by the same writer, Nancy Gibbs. Although the reporting for those stories was done by a team of journalists (a practice common to newsweekly journalism), the use of one writer provided not only stylistic continuity, but also a perspective that allowed her, and *Time*, to "see" the bigger "story" of the attacks and their aftermath.

Nancy Gibbs also wrote the cover story for *Time*'s yearend issue summarizing the lasting meaning of the September 11th story. By then, Gibbs placed the attack within a broader narrative about American war and generational heroism: "We did not expect much from a generation that had spent its middle age examining all the ways it failed to measure up to the one that had come before—all fat, no muscle, less a beacon to the world than a bully, drunk on blessings taken for granted . . . The terrorists were counting on our cowardice. They've learned a lot about us since them. And so have we."[73] This characterization excluded from the story of September 11th anyone younger than "middle age," including most firefighters and many World Trade Center victims. Yet it described the issue's cover subject, *Time*'s "Person of the Year," New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani, who (along with a runner-up, President George W. Bush) presumably stood for redeemed American Baby Boomers with their own new war against foreign evil.

Time's yearend issue discussed the attack in a documentary but primarily memorial way, with black-and-white photographs, printed on black-bordered pages, of visitors looking at the site weeks after the attacks and of the lower Manhattan skyline without the World Trade Center towers.[74] The issue also included a full-color picture taken from ground-level, looking upward at the towers, whole, against a deep blue sky. *U. S. News & World Report* combined memorial and optimism by using a black background on its cover but the main coverline, "A Nation Reborn: How America Is Moving Ahead." *Newsweek* used the burning Trade Center towers to form the "11," with "SEPT" above them, against the black background of its cover, but its skyline promoted an article called "Who's Next: People for the Future."[75]

As its cover treatment suggested, *Newsweek* devoted the most space to reprinting photographs from the attacks and revisiting the early horror of the events. Its cover story, titled "The Day that Changed America," focused particularly on firefighters, the group who, while many of them died in the attacks, had by yearend emerged as the "heroes" of the broader American story of the tragedy. The article opened alongside not a photograph, but an illustration of a firefighter, reaching out (toward the reader) as smoke billowed behind him, and it included one New York City firefighter, Bill Feehan, among the characters through whom it told "The Story of September 11."[76] This 31-page summary of that day ended with its consequences specifically for firefighters, noting: "Some firefighters are recalling the words of Tennyson's 'Charge of the Light Brigade.' 'Was there a man dismay'd?/Not tho' the soldier knew/Someoone had blundered./Theirs not to make reply,/Theirs not to reason why,/Theirs but to do and die.'"[77]

Discussion

During the month following the September 11th attacks, the three major American newsweekly magazines told a cohesive story of the tragedy and its aftermath, a story that moved from shock and fear to inspiration and pride. They did so by using extensive testimony from readers and mourners across the country, as well as victims and direct observers of the attacks. These actors participated, along with the journalists themselves, in the performance of a ritual with symbolic visual representations of candles, portraits of the dead, and the American flag. Secular ritual was embedded in the components of this journalism, which overtly used religious and patriotic language (with perhaps the most striking example being *Newsweek*'s second-week cover showing firemen raising the American flag and carrying the sole coverline "God Bless America").

Overall, this coverage corresponded with the stages of a funeral ceremony. In that sense, it provides evidence that journalism plays an important role in—and can in certain circumstances be a form of—civil religion. It also provides evidence that, even when events are "unthinkable," journalists place upsetting and chaotic news into story plots that they have used before and that are part of the grand cultural narrative of American resilience and progress.

Indeed, the narrative that emerged from the first month of newsweekly coverage of September 11th bore remarkable resemblance to what Edward Linenthal has identified as the "progressive narrative" that emerged in cultural responses to the Oklahoma City bombing. This story, he writes, included the courage of victims and survivors but focused more on moving anecdotes about rescue volunteers. "If the bombing was an event that would be remembered as a terrorist act of mass murder, the response would be recalled as a heroic saga, a moral lesson to be told and sung and celebrated for generations to come." He explains:

> The progressive narrative of the bombing invites people to focus on possibility, opportunity, healing, rebuilding. It celebrates what is perceived as the essential goodness of Americans, revealed in response to the bombing. It hopes for a revitalized civic life in the collective energies of citizens inspired by their own deeds. Its most powerful theme, expressed in the language of civic renewal, is one particularly familiar to members of religious communities in Oklahoma City: New life springs from death.[78]

News coverage following September 11th is a compelling illustration of James Carey's definition of communication as "the process by which the real is created, maintained, celebrated, transformed, and repaired."[79] It is important to note that—especially during the middle stage of liminality, when the social hierarchy is shaky—this communicative process was one in which journalists shared the telling of the story with "real people" (including readers) and in which the rhetoric of journalism paralleled the political and religious rhetoric in use in the broader American culture. One might say, therefore, that the newsweeklies were "simply covering" what was going on in the nation, not constructing reality. Yet their role was not exterior to the story. Ritual communication, notes Eric Rothenbuhler, "is not something the meaning of which is above or beyond or behind the backs of its participants—some part of it may be, but in the biggest sense its meaning for the participants is what a ritual is about."[80]

The news media were in fact at the very center of the ritual. Without them, Americans would not have been able to witness the scenes of disaster, hear survivors' testimony and leaders' consolation, and see their own representation as mourners. Only through national news media were millions of people across the country able to so fully participate in the ceremony—and was it possible for this to become an "American" story in symbolic ways that went beyond the fact of war. In American journalism, the lasting story of September 11th was not one of terror, death, and destruction, but one of courage, redemption, and patriotic pride.

Notes

[1] Kenneth Auchincloss, "We Shall Overcome," *Newsweek*, 24 September 2001, 25.

[2] Nancy Gibbs, "Life on the Home Front," *Time*, 1 October 2001, 17.

[3] Edward T. Linenthal, *The Unfinished Bombing: Oklahoma City in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 111.

[4] For instance: Steve M. Barkin, "The Journalist as Storyteller: An Interdisciplinary Perspective," *American Journalism* 1, no. 2 (Winter 1984): 27-33; Arthur Asa Berger, *Narratives in Popular Culture, Media, and Everyday Life* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997); S. Elizabeth Bird and Robert W. Dardenne, "Myth, Chronicle, and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News," in *Social Meanings of News*, ed. Dan Berkowitz (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997), 333-50; Peter Dahlgren, "Television News Narrative," in *Framing Friction: Media and Social Conflict*, ed. Mary S. Mander (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1999): 189-214; David Eason, "Telling Stories and Making Sense," *Journal of Popular Culture* 15, no. 2 (Fall 1981): 125-29; Walter R. Fisher, "The Narrative Paradigm: In the Beginning," *Journal of*

Communication 35, no. 4 (Autumn 1985): 74-89; Jack Lule, *Daily News, Eternal Stories: The Mythological Role of Journalism* (NY: Guilford Press, 2001); Paul Rock, "News as Eternal Recurrence," in *The Manufacture of News*, ed. Stanley Cohen and Jock Young (London: Sage, 1973), 226-43; Robert Rutherford Smith, "Mythic Elements in Television News," in *Social Meanings of News*, 325-32; and Barbie Zelizer, "Achieving Journalistic Authority through Narrative," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 7, no. 4 (December 1990): 366-76. As these scholars did, this work also draws, in a broader way, on the work of theorists who have studied the structural nature of communication—for instance: Roland Barthes, *Image – Music – Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (NY: Hill and Wang, 1977); James Carey, *Communication as Culture* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989); Claude Levi-Strauss, *Structural Anthropology* (NY: Basic Books, 1968); Vladimir Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*, 2nd ed., trans. Laurence Scott (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968; originally published 1928); and Victor W. Turner, *From Ritual to Theater: The Human Seriousness of Play* (NY: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982).

[5] Hayden White, "The Value of Narrativity in the Representation of Reality," in *On Narrative*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.

[6] Eason, "Telling Stories and Making Sense," 126.

[7] Dan Berkowitz, "Non-Routine News and Newswork: Exploring a What-a-Story," in *Social Meanings of News*, 363.

[8] Robert Karl Manoff, "Writing the News (By Telling the 'Story')," in *Reading the News*, ed. Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson (NY: Pantheon, 1987), 228.

[9] Steve M. Barkin and Michael Gurevitch, "Out of Work and on the Air: Television News and Unemployment," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 4, no. 4 (1987): 4.

[10] All issues of *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U. S. News & World Report* dated 1 May 1995, 8 May 1995, and 15 May 1995.

[11] Carolyn Kitch, "'A News of Feeling as Well as Fact': Mourning and Memorial in American Newsmagazines," *Journalism: Theory, Practice and Criticism* 1, no. 2 (2000), 171-95.

[12] James Carey, "Why and How? The Dark Continent of American Journalism," in *Reading the News*, 196.

[13] This point is made by Steve Barkin in "The Journalist as Storyteller," 29.

[14] Andrew Walsh, "Good for What Ails Us," *Religion in the News* 4, no. 3 (Fall 2001), 2.

[15] Carey, *Communication as Culture*, 43. He compares his ritual view to the more traditional "transmission view" that "centers on the extension of messages across geography for purpose of control" (43).

[16] Emile Durkheim, *On Morality and Society*, ed. Robert N. Bellah (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 201. Originally from *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life: A Study in Religious Sociology*, trans. Joseph Ward Swain (London: Allen and Unwin, 1915).

[17] Frederick Bird, "The Contemporary Ritual Milieu," in *Rituals and Ceremonies in Popular Culture*, ed. Ray B. Browne (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1980), 24.

[18] I am borrowing the words used by Nico H. Frijda in his discussion of the funeral service ("Commemorating," in *Collective Memory and Political Events*, ed. James W. Pennebaker, Dario Paez, and Bernard Rimé [Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997], 114). Frijda, Turner, and other scholars have based their arguments on the theoretical foundation laid by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep in his seminal work *The Rites of Passage* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960; originally published in 1908).

[19] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977; originally published in 1969), 167.

[20] van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 164-65.

[21] Cheryl R. Jorgensen-Earp and Lori A. Lanzilotti, "Public Memory and Private Grief: The Construction of Shrines at the Sites of Public Tragedy," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 84, no. 2 (1998), 156-57.

[22] Jorgensen-Earp and Lanzilotti, "Public Memory and Private Grief," 154. They are quoting Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, 28.

[23] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 95.

[24] "A Letter to News-Minded People" [advertisement], *News-week* [sic], 25 March 1933, 33.

[25] "The Story of an Experiment," *Time*, 8 March 1948, 63.

[26] Lance Morrow, "The *Time* of Our Lives," and E. Bruce Hallett, "To Our Readers," *Time: 75th Anniversary Issue*, 9 March 1998, 86.

[27] All three of the newsweeklies are published on Mondays and carry the issue's *off*-sale date; i.e., they are dated a week after the day they are actually published. So issues dated September 24th were on sale on September 17th, six days after the attack. Although two of them were undated, the "special editions" issued by all three magazines were on sale on Friday, September 14th, three days after the attack.

[28] This weekly mail-receipt figure was mentioned in the "Letters" department of the issues of *Newsweek* dated October 1st, October 8th, and October 15th.

[29] In a sense, of course, the separation stage is a metaphor for all news, since news by definition is something unexpected or unusual that disrupts the status quo.

[30] *Time: Special Report*, n.d. [fall] 2001.

[31] *Newsweek: Extra Edition*, n.d. [fall], 2001.

[32] *U. S. News & World Report*, 14 September 2001.

[33] Barbie Zelizer, *Remembering to Forget: Holocaust Memory through the Camera's Eye* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 104.

[34] *Newsweek: Extra Edition*.

[35] Lisa Stein, "A Smoky Spring to Safety and 'Flesh in the Street,'" *U. S. News & World Report*, 14 September 2001, 46.

[36] Noam Neusner, "Disaster Turns to Panic, but Then, Suddenly, to Acts of Rare Kindness," *U. S. News & World Report*, 14 September 2001, 49.

[37] "'I Saw Things No One Should Ever See,'" *Newsweek: Extra Edition* (n.d. [fall] 2001), 57, 62-63; "Ground Zero," *U. S. News & World Report*, 14 September 2001, 46.

[38] David Whitman, "Heroes, Victims," *U. S. News & World Report*, 24 September 2001, 38.

[39] Nancy Gibbs, "If You Want to Humble an Empire," *Time: Special Report*, n.p. (there was no pagination at all in this special issue).

[40] Lance Morrow, "The Case for Rage and Retribution," *Time: Special Report*, n.p.

[41] Jack Goody, "Death and the Interpretation of Culture," *Death in America*, ed. David E. Stanndard (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1975), 5.

[42] Brenda Segna, "Letters," *Time*, 1 October 2001, 8; Chris Daly, "Letters," *Newsweek*, 1 October 2001, 12.

[43] *Time*, 24 September 2001; *Newsweek*, 1 October 2001; *U. S. News & World Report*, 1 October 2001.

[44] Nancy Gibbs, "Mourning in America," *Time*, 24 September 2001, 21.

[45] Gibbs, "Mourning in America," 19.

[46] John Bodnar, *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 9.

[47] Gibbs, "Mourning in America," 19.

[48] "The Victims," *Time*, 24 September 2001, 68-77; "Lost Lives," *Newsweek: Commemorative Issue*, n. d. [fall] 2001, 90-99; "The Victims," *Time*, 24 September 2001, 68-77; "Love and Loss," *Newsweek*, 24 September 2001, 89-95.

[49] *Newsweek*, 24 September 2001, 16-17.

[50] James Nachtwey, "Viewpoint: Red, White and Blue," *Time*, 1 October 2001, 88-93.

[51] "Farewell," *Time*,1 October 2001, 114.

[52] Other types of public figures also were quoted on how to grieve. For instance, choreographer Mark Morris suggested that Americans listen to Haydn's *Seven Last Words of Christ* and Bach's *Mass in B Minor* ("60 Second Symposium," *Time*, 1 October 2001, 13).

[53] "Words of Wisdom," *Newsweek: Commemorative Issue*, 74-75.

[54] "Lost Lives," 90.

[55] "Lost Lives," 90; "60 Second Symposium," 13. The Tennyson quote actually came from literary critic Harold Bloom, as his recommendation of what Americans should read in order to gain perspective and consolation.

[56] Richard M. Smith, "Spirit of America," *Newsweek: Commemorative Issue*, 1.

[57] Wilbur Zelinsky, for instance, contends that the American flag has "preempted the place, visually and otherwise, of the crucifix in older Christian lands" (*Nation into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988], 196). Anthropologist Raymond Firth has written that "national flags tend to be assigned a quality of special reserve . . . Use of the term 'desecration' for behavior not regarded as appropriate to handling of a national flag indicates how the notion of reserve is related to the Durkheimian concept of the sacred" (*Symbols: Public and Private* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1973], 340).

[58] Jonathan Alter, "Patriotism," *Newsweek: Commemorative Issue*, 80.

[59] This image was almost immediately compared, by news media and others, to the iconic World War II photo of the flag raising by American soldiers at Iwo Jima.

[60] Marci McDonald, Josh Fischman, and Mary Brophy Marcus, "Courage Under Terrible Fire," *U. S. News & World Report*, 24 September 2001, 40-43. Also: Joel Stein, "Digging Out," *Time*, 24 September 2001, 60-66; "The Heroes," *Newsweek: Commemorative Edition*, 46-60.

[61] Kenneth Auchincloss, "Back on Our Feet," *Newsweek: Commemorative Issue*, 18.

[62] Gibbs, "Life on the Home Front," 17.

[63] This ritual use of photography by non-journalists is discussed by Andrew Mendelson in "2001: A Visual Odyssey," *Viewpoints* (Spring 2002) 9, no. 1, 2. He notes of his own visit to the site: "Several times I saw people pose, smiling for a relative's camera, with piles of debris looming behind them. People also posed for pictures before signing a memorial banner. The desire for proof that 'I was there' is strong."

[64] Nancy Gibbs, "What Comes Next?" *Time*, 8 October 2001, 22-25.

[65] Linda Kulman, "Lost Innocence," *U. S. News & World Report*, 8 October 2001, 44.

[66] Cathleen McGuigan, "Out of the Rubble," and "Stepping Out," *Newsweek*, 8 October 2001, 12, 18-19.

[67] Daniel McGinn, "'We'll Pull Through,'" *Newsweek*, 8 October 2001, 53.

[68] "The Site," *Time*, 15 October 2001, 86-87.

[69] By the following week, the main story was terrorists' mailing of letters containing anthrax.

[70] "Special Report: E-Learning," *U. S. News & World Report*, 15 October 2001, 43-78; "Special Advertising Section: Fall Health & Fitness," *Newsweek*, 15 October 2001, n. p. (between editorial pages 40 and 41).

[71] Judith P. Austin, "Letters," *Time*, 15 October 2001, 11; Maria Russell, "Letters," *Newsweek*, 15 October 2001, 16; Mike Malachowski, "Letters," *Newsweek*, 15 October 2001, 19. Some dissenting views were published, even at this late stage in the coverage. For instance, another reader letter printed in the same issue of *Newsweek* (15 October 2001) said, "I didn't sleep much last night . . . I don't want to forget. I don't want to push the searing images from my mind . . . this horrible reality is burned into my brain" (Joan Fritzler, "Letters," 15). An essayist for *U. S. News & World Report* wrote, in a second special issue dated 12 October 2001, "We're not sure whether we have just been through Armageddon or whether we're waiting for Armageddon . . . Try as we might to get a good night's sleep, we still wake up feeling tired" (Gloria Berger, "Beholding the Unknown," 64).

[72] These appeared in the "Letters" section of *Newsweek*, 15 October 2001, 16.

[73] Nancy Gibbs, "Person of the Year," *Time* (31 December 2001/7 January 2002), 36.

[74] *Time*, 31 December 2001/7 January 2002.

[75] *U. S. News & World Report*, 31 December 2001-7 January 2002; *Newsweek*, 31 December 2001/7 January 2002. *Time*'s yearend issue (31 December 2001/7 January 2002), however, retained its signature red cover border around its "Person of the Year," New York City Major Rudolph Giuliani (perhaps to avoid any suggestion that Giuliani himself was dead).

[76] "The Day that Changed America," *Newsweek*, 31 December 2001/7 January 2002, 40-71. Feehan's surviving grandsons and the boys' firefighting fathers, all in wearing NYFD helmets, were shown in the story and on the table-of-contents page (3).

[77] "The Day that Changed America," 71.

[78] Linenthal, *The Unfinished Bombing*, 46, 49, 53. Because this book was published in the fall of 2001, Linenthal could not have anticipated how timely and insightful his analysis would be in light of the September 11th attacks.

[79] James Carey, "Communication and Economics," in *James Carey: A Critical Reader*, ed. Eve-Stryker Munson and Catherine A. Warren (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 68.

[80] Eric Rothenbuhler, *Ritual Communication: From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1998), 125.

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Inequality of Resources: The Crisis of Media Conglomeration and the Case for Reform

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Abstract

When the media is owned and operated by corporate conglomerates the public is deprived of a diversity of viewpoints, and individual journalists feel pressured to conform to a corporate line. Attempts to reform the current trend in the American media originate most often from two theoretical camps: libertarianism and public journalism. This paper finds that neither of these approaches poses a satisfactory response to media conglomeration, and offers Ronald Dworkin's "equality of resources" as a model of economic reform capable of rectifying the current situation.

Inequality of Resources: The Crisis of Media Conglomeration and the Case for Reform

Media critics often speak of the trouble with American mass media ownership. As the corporations that own American mass media continue to merge and reduce in number, numerous media critics argue the American public and working journalists suffer in the name of corporate profits. (Alger, 1998: Altschull, 1994; Bagdikian, 2000; Fishman, 1980; McChesney, 1999). Media conglomeration affects journalistic autonomy by valuing the numerous financial interests of the corporation over the practice of objective journalism. Media conglomerates produce news that furthers, or at least does not hinder, corporate values. The American public is negatively affected by the conglomeration of media because a diversity of viewpoints is replaced with the views of a handful of media companies, which present content tailored to propagate their domination in various commercial markets throughout the world.

The reduction of media sources in the United States from many to a few is the antithesis of the intent of the founding fathers (Altschull, 1994). If the current situation is undesirable to both the American public and journalists alike, what is the response or solution to these conditions provided by the academy and working journalists? In contemporary academic and working journalism there are primarily two ways of thinking about the basic role of the press in America and the accompanying normative roles that would accompany such philosophies: libertarianism and public journalism.[1]

Libertarian press theory holds that the most important attribute of the media is its freedom from government intervention (Merrill, 1974). Libertarians hold dear to the concept of negative freedom, which is freedom from the deprivation of freedom. When addressing the problem of media conglomeration, libertarianism responds that the individual who finds fault with the increasing consolidation of media ownership has the freedom to do whatever is in her means to change those conditions (Merrill, 1974). For the libertarian, if a media critic is concerned about the lack of diverse views in the American media, she has the freedom to produce and disseminate her own views in contrast to those offered by a media conglomerate such as AOL-Time Warner.[2]

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[1] It should be noted that these are not the only two ways of thinking about journalism in America. However, they are the two most common approaches to journalism in the United States and both ways of thinking have been at the center of much debate since Public Journalism debuted in the early 1990s. Also, within each camp they there are range of debates concerning particulars. The differences within these approaches are not the concern of this paper. Rather this paper takes the generalizations of liberal theory and public journalism (which includes civic journalism and communitarian approaches) and uses those main ideas to approach the question at hand.

[2] The largest of Bagdikian's (2000) six major media conglomerates.

Public journalism approaches the problem of media conglomeration from a different and, perhaps, less direct approach. For the public journalist, the conglomeration of ownership and reduction of diversity in the media is the result of a public that is no longer engaged with the press (Lambeth, 1998). The public journalist believes that the American public is apathetic because the media does not act in the public's interest or directly engage the public in a dialogue. It is because of a lack of press-public dialogue that media corporations continue to grow in size and scope while the American citizenry sit back and helplessly throw up their hands. Public journalism responds to this situation by arguing that journalists must reengage the public, believing a reengaged public will not sit idly by while diversity in the media is forsaken for profit (Glasser & Craft, 1998).

Does either of these approaches adequately address the concerns about media conglomeration? If not, what specific concerns regarding media consolidation are left unresolved by each approach? Is their an alternative solution that addresses the problems of media conglomeration and also appeases both libertarians and public journalists? It is the intent of this paper to formulate answers to these questions.

The Problem of Conglomeration in Modern American Media

Although not alone, perhaps the most popular work concerning the topic of media conglomeration is Ben Bagdikian's (2000) work, The Media Monopoly. In this work, the conglomeration of media ownership is cited as one of the most powerful influences on the creation of news. Bagdikian gives evidence of a climate in which media properties are increasingly owned and operated by a decreasing number of large, multi-national corporate entities that usually have diversified interests in many other commercial sectors.[3] The diversified interests of the media corporation translate to a strong desire by the conglomerate to preserve the status quo and protect its various financial interests.

The financial interests of a conglomerate are often communicated through content produced by media that is owned by the conglomerate. It is Bagdikian's concern that if a media conglomerate has financial interests in the energy sector, for example, then the journalists employed by the conglomerate will not be allowed to critically examine that sector, as any negative views could be harmful to corporate profits. Perhaps even worse is the idea that the journalists working for a conglomerate will actually be compelled to produce content that promotes the financial interests of the conglomerate that employs her. Bagdikian calls this a "landmark in the degradation of news: the increasing insertion of a news company's own business goals as a selection factor in what the readers will be permitted to see or not see" (p. XXV).

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[3] Evidence of increasing media concentration can be found by comparing Bagdikian's first edition of The Media Monopoly with the most current. In the first edition, printed in 1983, Bagdikian explained that American media was run by 50 companies. Less than twenty years later, the 2000 edition found the same percentage of media run by only six companies.

Another concern regarding the consolidation of media ownership voiced by Bagdikian (2000) is that as more media entities fall under the ownership of conglomerates the content that is produced by journalists working in this system suffer because large corporations value profit over quality of product. Corporations make a larger profit by reducing the personnel and resources available to journalists, and this choice directly affects how and what stories can be pursued.

Herman and Chomsky (1988) explain that another aspect of concern regarding the reduction of the number of journalists by media conglomerates is the resulting reliance on "official sources," which include government spokespeople and officials. Herman and Chomsky explain that, "the media need a steady, reliable flow of the raw materials of news" (p. 18). The media turn to the government for this source of news materials, and the government provides these materials in the form of sound-bites and statements, which are considered credible. The concern Herman and Chomsky voice regarding the utilization of official sources is that state sources consistently provide the view of the state, and opposing voices are often not provided to contrast the state view. As Bennett (1990) explains, "public officials (are granted) a virtual news monopoly (that) restricts diversity in the politically volatile 'marketplace of ideas,' thereby safeguarding the business climate in which media conglomerates operate" (p. 103).

In addition to being aware of the institutional and external pressures on working journalists, one should also understand how these pressures manifest themselves in media content. The fact that media content is biased or influenced by corporate values is not always obvious to the reader of the news. Bagdikian (2000) explains that content is often slanted by, "treat(ing) some unliked subjects accurately but briefly, and (treating) subjects favorable to the corporate ethic frequently and in depth" (p. 15). Bagdikian goes on to argue that because choosing and editing content is central to the function of the journalist, it is difficult for the reader to tell when editing is the result of ownership interests. In fact, journalists do not necessarily edit stories according to a corporate line on a conscious level; rather the thinking manifests itself in the day to day duties of journalists presenting stories (Hartley, 1982).

The reader of the news faces further difficulty in detecting when pressures have affected media content because of the liberal notion of an objective press. Bennett (1996) writes that:

> The professional practices embodying journalism norms of independence and objectivity…create conditions that systematically favor the reporting of narrow, official perspectives. At the same time, the postures of independence and objectivity created by the use of these professional practices give the impression that the resulting news is the best available version of reality. (p. 143)

Assumptions about the world made by the press are presented as 'objective' truths, so the assumptions inherent to the way in which a journalist tells a story become a reality for the reader. Bennett (1996) warns that the inherent danger in this process is that "as one reality comes to dominate all others, the dominant reality begins to seem objective" (p. 149). The concern of media critics is that the dominant reality often benefits specific institutions while being of great disadvantage to the public.

A further concern is that media consolidation and the corresponding reduction of viewpoints have a negative effect on democracy. Effective democracy depends upon decisions made by an informed citizenry (Dahl, 1989; Dewey, 1927; Fishkin, 1991; Page, 1996). In today's society an individual experiences the world in a mediated manner; an individual becomes informed by consulting a variety of viewpoints that are present in the mass media, and then makes a decision based upon exposure to those viewpoints (Page, 1996). Based upon an informed viewpoint the individual is able to effectively participate in the democratic process, and when many individuals participate in the democratic process in this manner the resulting democracy is rich and effective. Alternatively, if a variety of viewpoints are not available in the mass media, then the individual does not have the proper range of information from which to make an informed decision. In this model, which critics argue is the case in today's consolidated media, the decisions made by the individual are based upon information that is slanted to state and corporate desires, so the results of the democratic process are beneficial to the state and corporate ethic. This leads to a poor democracy and a cyclical process by which those who define reality reap an increase in power, and because of this increased power they are able to continually define reality according to their interests.

The Libertarian Response

Libertarian press theory has its roots in the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th century (Siebert, Peterson, & Schramm, 1956). From this tradition libertarianism holds that freedom is the basis of the good life, and freedom of the press is essential for good journalism. The freedom for the libertarian is a negative freedom, the freedom *from* government intervention; negative freedom prevents the government from affecting what content a journalist produces. Once negative freedom is preserved, the libertarian argues, then journalists are able to produce whatever content they choose and a "marketplace of ideas" opens up in which citizens have a variety of views to choose from (Merrill, 1974).

Negative freedom is the freedom from state coercion, in contrast to a positive freedom, which is a freedom to achieve some good. The libertarian believes that positive freedoms lead to state sponsored coercion that forces the individual to achieve a specific good, which is an infringement on individual freedom (Merrill, 1974). In the case of the journalist, a positive freedom compels her to pursue a story, or an angle, related to a particular conception of the good; for libertarians this is unacceptable. John Merrill (1974), in a discussion of Ayn Rand in his classic doctrine of a liberal press, The Imperative of Freedom, explains that:

> There are no "rights" for the consumers of journalism if no journalist chooses to produce particular kinds of journalism certain consumers *want*. There is only the right for any citizen to be a journalist and produce them himself -- or for him to *try* to get his ideas into journalism. [Author's emphasis] (p. 111)

For the libertarian, rights are based on the individual, thus if the individual does not find her views expressed in the media, she has the right to produce those views herself or continue to search for those views in a press that is free from government intervention. Is this an effective answer to the problem of media conglomeration? Nerone (1995) would answer no, arguing that the problem with libertarianism is that it interprets the press as an individual, but in today's society the press is an institution. In the libertarian model, if a journalist working for a media conglomerate with corporate interests in energy production wants to produce a piece of journalism critical of American dependence on oil and is in some way censored by management because of concern for the company's economic interests, what recourse does the working journalist have? According to Merrill (1974) she is free to attempt to publish her views elsewhere. For Merrill, since the government will not prevent an individual from publishing her views the individual has all the freedom she needs. In the abstract this sounds perfectly reasonable, but the ability to actually follow through with this freedom and produce content in today's media climate makes acting on one's freedom much more difficult than the libertarian philosophy would have us believe.

Herman & Chomsky (1988) discuss the difficulty of an individual producing her own content in traditional media. Start-up costs and the dependence on advertising to sustain existence are two realities that filter out producers of media until only the wealthy are left. One would speculate that the concentration of media since Herman & Chomsky's writing has only made this process even more difficult.

Libertarians may point to the Internet as the great equalizer of the individual voice in the face of media concentration. However, online publication still requires access to technology and financial resources to maintain Internet sites. Also, as online media has matured it continues to consolidate and prove less and less viable as a venture independent of traditional media (Herman & Chomsky, 1997; Sauter, 2000).

These factors indicate how libertarian press theory leaves the individual highly susceptible to the economic forces and pressures of the institution. The libertarian, fixated on the prevention of government intervention on the press, has let the real wolves settle in and is consequently held captive by the economic system even while she is provided the negative freedom she triumphs.

Merrill (1989) explains "libertarian advocates have a strong faith that a free press, working in a laissez-faire, unfettered situation, will naturally result in the abundance of information and pluralism of viewpoints necessary in a democratic society" (p.116).

However, media critics have indicated that the abundance of media voices in the media, which Merrill (1989) has faith will exist, are not there. Merrill (1989) himself acknowledges this condition when he writes that "an observant person, looking at the world of journalism, must be struck by the increasing conformity, the growing mechanization and regimentation, the submission of the individual to an ever-growing number of authorities" (p.124). In the modern media the individual finds herself dependent on and submissive to the corporation; she is powerless in the face of an institutional freedom to pursue corporate interests unfettered by government regulation. The freedom the libertarian triumphs is no longer enjoyed by the individual, rather it is championed by corporations in order to exploit the individual.

As conglomeration continues to increase in size and scope the strength of the individual continues to decrease. Liberal theory has no response to the relationship of individual power and the institution other than to argue that the individual is free form government regulation, but freedom from government censorship does nothing to address the gravity of consolidated media's increasing power. By not providing real protection for the individual journalist it becomes clear why the cycle of media concentration and reduction of viewpoints in American society continues to gain momentum.

The Public Journalism Response

Public journalism is a work in progress that has its genesis in what is perceived as the poor performance of the press in the 1988 presidential election (Dykers, 1998). Although there is much debate as to what is and is not public journalism, the general goals of the approach are described by Lambeth (1998) as journalism that attempts to:

> 1. listen systematically to the stories and ideas of citizens even while protecting its freedom to choose what to cover;
> 2. examine alternative ways to frame stories on important community issues;
> 3. choose frames that stand the best chance to stimulate citizen deliberation and build public understanding of issues;
> 4. take the initiative to report on major public problems in a way that advances public knowledge of possible solutions and the values served by alternative courses of action;
> 5. pay continuing and systematic attention to how well and how credibly it is communicating with the pubic. (p. 17)

Public journalists believe these goals are necessary in order to reconnect with an American public that has become cynical about political issues and unresponsive to the media as a whole (Glasser & Craft, 1998). Public journalists argue that the media must reengage the public in order to reestablish the connection between media and citizens, a connection which is necessary for effective democracy (Christians, 1993).

Regarding the concerns of media conglomeration the public journalist believes that reengaging the public will lead to, among other things, a better model of financing media operations. Corrigan (1999) writes:

> Public journalists argue that the news business is in decline because of a decline in civic engagement, a loss of interest in political life, and deterioration in the quality of public discourse. Public journalists hope to fix these "problem areas" in our public life, and consequently revive the news business. (p. 65)

Proponents view public journalism as a model of press operation that can reengage the public, arguing a reengaged public will be much more interested in what the media is reporting, because the media content will be determined, in a large part, by what the public thinks. This reconnection will lead to the public consuming the media at a higher rate, making financing of the press less dependent on advertisers, which leads to a press that can succeed outside of the corporate model.

Glasser and Craft (1998) weigh in on this claim when they state that "one of public journalism's most controversial claims rests on the supposition that good journalism, which is to say *public* journalism, will attract more and better readers, and thereby enhance a newspaper's standing in the marketplace" [author's emphasis] (p.208). Indeed, if libertarian thinking fails in some way in the application to real world scenarios, certainly the public journalism claim that the reengagement of the public through focus groups or town hall meetings[4] will lead to a viable financing of the press can be seen utopian.

Glasser and Craft (1998) state that:

> Public journalism remains conspicuously quiet on questions of press ownership and control. It also steers clear of related issues concerning the apparent contradiction between the interests of advertisers whose products and services appeal to a certain mix of readers and the interests of a press committed to empowering a broad spectrum of readers. (p. 213)

This is a valid criticism of the public journalism approach. If we are concerned about the effects of media conglomeration on the autonomy of the individual journalist and turn to public journalism, we are told that reengaging the public will lead to a more active citizenry who will embrace the media and support it financially. How far does public journalism propose the press can travel down this road? Will a reengaged public completely support the press so that it becomes a public domain? It would seem that this is the only way a press could exist without advertising or outside the corporate model. If public journalism allows advertising for support, wouldn't it fall prey to the concerns mentioned above by Glasser and Craft that the public interest and interests of advertisers and parent corporations would come into conflict?

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[4] Tactics commonly used in the public journalism fight (Corrigan, 1999)

Public journalism experiments are taking place at newspapers that are primarily part of large newspaper chains. For example, Knight-Ridder has been one of the bigger supporters of public journalism projects (Merrill, Gade, & Blevens, 2001). Will the practice of public journalism within a newspaper chain really lead to a breaking of the institutional mold that currently pressures journalists to conform to corporate lines? Would Knight-Ridder allow public journalism to pursue or develop dialogues regarding the inequalities and opportunism prevalent in corporate life? Would other public journalism projects be able to honestly discuss the environmental consequences of heavy oil dependence, if the parent company has interests in energy production? It does not seem likely that any newspaper chain or media conglomerate would let a public journalism project continue into areas that the company does not wish explored. As Glasser and Craft (1998) write:

> What can be said of a newspaper's commitment to public journalism when, to take but one illustration, the St. Paul Pioneer Press solicits and receives a $61,000 grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts while its parent company, Knight-Ridder, posts a net income in 1995 in excess of $160 million. (p. 214)

Facts such as these indicate the triviality of public journalism projects and the limited extent to which a newspaper chain will support them. How then can public journalism honestly hope to transform society? If our foremost concern is the effect of media conglomerates on the autonomy of the individual journalist, can experiments conducted by papers within those very conglomerates actually be believed to achieve the civic transformation that would be, in some part, centered on changing the very values that the conglomerates hold dear? It does not seem likely.

A more basic problem may be public journalisms' claim that reengaging the public will do anything, much less address our concerns. It is quite likely that the individual working journalist, looking for relief from corporate pressures, is "likely to smirk at the suggestion that daily newspapers are floundering because of a 'disconnect with the citizenry'" (Corrigan, 1999, p. 66). What public journalism can do in the face of media conglomeration may very well be a question that cannot be considered until a more basic question is answered. That question being: what can public journalism do at all?

Public journalism has its share of academics and practitioners arguing the specifics of public journalism and defending their experiments against libertarians who argue public journalism is the end of press freedom. To opponents of public journalism Carey (1999) asks, "the question for critics is this: do you have a better solution?" (p.64). Perhaps Carey is right and there is no better solution than public journalism, certainly we have found problems with the libertarian's response to media conglomeration, but does a lack of alternatives make public journalism the solution? Carey goes on to state that public journalism "is, at the moment, the only movement around that at least provides some oppositional force to the next wave in the global concentration of power and the tyranny of the market" (p. 64). The opposition that public journalism poses to global media conglomerates seems speculative at best. But if we take Carey at his word and agree that public journalism is our only weapon in a fight against corporations, is that good enough? Should we then continue to invest our time, experiments in the workplace, and academic thought to a cause that can merely be said to be better than nothing?

Equality of Resources

If we cannot find a solution to the problem of media conglomeration within the system as it stands now, then perhaps the reason no solution exists is because the system will not allow it. Carey (1999) writes that:

> The issue today is whether the values of the republican tradition as embodied in the first amendment are the foundation of political liberty that the organizations that own the press have an obligation to sustain or whether the first amendment is seen largely as an economic right to enable a protection for those corporate organizations to sustain themselves. (p. 65)

It seems that in modern America more often than not the latter is true. The negative liberty of the first amendment leads to Merrill's (1989) institutional freedom, which is a freedom that allows organizations to profit in an unregulated market. Individuals depend upon those institutions to earn livelihoods, and the livelihoods earned in the corporate model often depend upon the individual falling in line with corporate beliefs. The current economic system is one of forced compliance, and Carey argues that "modern economic developments seem to favor authoritarian rather than democratic regimes" (p. 64).

If it is the economic system of today's society that allows media conglomeration to continue, then it is the economic system that needs to be changed in order to arrest the deterioration of the media and democracy. Some media scholars have argued that regulation of American media is the answer to the problems of media consolidation (Bagdikian, 2000; Baker, 2002; McChesney, 1999). Opponents to media regulation argue that such rules actually infringe upon speech itself, preventing someone from speaking through as many mediums or to as many people as they desire (Merrill et al., 2001). Opponents of regulation also question why the media should operate under restrictions that are not present in other industries. Each of these arguments takes place within a box that is capitalism in America, a system of capitalism that continues to decrease regulation in all industries, from energy to media. It is a change in the structuring of the basic economic system that can alter how the media operates, a restructuring that allows for a liberal notion of a free press but alleviates the pressures exuded by consolidated media ownership.

The idea of economic change harkens back to a time when socialism or communism as an alternative social structure was actually discussed in the United States, but the change proposed in this paper is not Marxist, rather it is based upon the purely liberal notion of "equality of resources" as constructed by Ronald Dworkin (2000).

Dworkin's (2000) "equality of resources" is an acknowledgement that "no government is legitimate that does not show equal concern for the fate of all the citizens over whom it claims dominion and from whom it claims allegiance" (p. 1). From this ethical position Dworkin argues that when wealth is "very unequally distributed, as the wealth of even very prosperous nations now is, then (that nation's) equal concern is suspect" (p. 1). Dworkin explains that the distribution of wealth is the product of national policies, regulations, and tax codes that determine an individual's ability to generate and retain wealth.

In modern America there is great disparity of wealth, and Dworkin (2000) argues it is unjust that the American government allows this inequality to exist. If the government allows one individual, for example, to make ten-million dollars a year as a professional athlete and another to make only $20,000 a year growing tomatoes, then the government is not showing equal concern for each of these two individuals. It allows one an almost incomprehensible amount of wealth while another certainly struggles to provide the necessities essential to survival.

To alleviate the situation of unjust wealth distribution in America, Dworkin (2000) suggests a "periodic redistribution of resources through some form of income tax" (p. 90-1). The wealth of the very rich would be redistributed to the very poor until the range of wealth is reduced immensely and recognized as more just even with a cursory glance.[5]

"Equality of resources" cuts the legs out from under the current situation of increasing media conglomeration. Currently, media corporations continue to consolidate in order to increase the profits and wealth of those controlling the conglomerates. If the wealth presently available to those controlling corporations is not allowed to accumulate unjustly, then the impetus for strangling all competition is reduced. Also, if individuals who are currently without resources are distributed resources according to an idea of equality, then those individuals would be better equipped to participate in the mass media, if they choose to do so.

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[5] Those interested should consult Dworkin's (2000) work for a full explanation of "equality of resources." Specifically, how this approach accounts for an individual's life choices impacting how wealth is distributed.

This system allows for the desires of both the libertarians and public journalists. "Equality of resources" still adheres to the negative freedom triumphed by libertarians as there is no obligation to produce any type of speech in this model, it is merely an economic distribution based upon an equal concern for all citizens. The public journalist is also appeased by this new approach, once the pressures of consolidated media ownership are removed from the equation the public journalist can continue on with her project of reconnecting with the American public, freed from the uphill battle against concentrated media ownership.

Additionally, if resource distribution takes place across society, the face of media ownership would change without a battle for specific media regulation. Media regulation will not be debated between critics and owners, rather the basis of how wealth is controlled will be changed across society, from the current situation in which those who are lucky enough to be in a specific situation take every thing they want, increasing their stranglehold on resources along the way, to a process by which all are afforded resources in an equal manner, and can then pursue whatever good they desire. In this model of resource distribution the journalist who is opposed to the policies of a specific media outlet would actually have the resources to take advantage of her freedom and look for publication elsewhere.

Conclusion

Many media critics have warned of the effects on journalistic autonomy suffered in the face of the increasingly consolidated ownership of mass media (Alger, 1998; Altschull, 1994; Bagdikian, 2000; Fishman, 1980; McChesney, 1999). As media conglomerates continue to establish monopolies, diversify economic interests, and reduce media content the public suffers from exposure to information altered to fit corporate values and interests, and the individual journalist is compelled to conform to the corporate line.

Ronald Dworkin's (2000) "equality of resources" provides a way in which to consider an economic change that can curtail the rampant media conglomeration that is destroying the American media. "Equality of resources" would transform the economic model of American society by creating a system that is not conducive to media conglomeration. Once the pressure of consolidated media ownership is taken out of the American media equation then academics and working journalists can discuss the specifics of journalism in an atmosphere where real change is possible.

The possibility of economic reform in the United States may seem a distant dream, and perhaps it is, but as Corrigan (1999) explains:

> There is no easy solution to the lack of media competition within the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court, the Congress, and a succession of U.S. Presidents have taken measures for two decades that only make it easier for monopoly growth within the news industry. It would take an enormous public outcry to get our government to change course and restrict media ownership in the public interest, especially with the considerable political clout of giant media corporations. (p. 170)

Any change to the media system as it stands now will not come easy. But this is no excuse to set low goals or believe that small projects will make huge differences. The view from within the box of modern American journalism offers no real hope of change. If we are to seriously seek a solution to the problems of media conglomeration we will have to leave the confinements of our discipline and enlist political scientists, sociologists, philosophers, and economists in the fight. But it is better to realize that a fundamental change is necessary than to dilute ourselves into thinking that a shift in emphasis will transform the system. It is better to understand exactly what will be required to change the media structure than to simply designate the best of several dim possibilities as our course of action. We must set our sights on lofty goals, goals that if realized will radically change a system that continues to grow sicker. A sickness that infects not only the American media, but the process of democracy and the American public as a whole.

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C+CS

Buying Love: Sex on Television, Consumption, and Advanced Capitalism

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Traditionally, Marxists have seen capitalist ideology as promoting monogamous, marital sexual relations in order to maintain a stable work force. Findings from a number of quantitative content analyses and critical viewings of sex on television reveal a system of messages that instead promotes individual sexual self-indulgence. It is speculated that this self-indulgence may generalize beyond the sexual to economic domains, serving to promote increased consumption, thereby serving the demands of advanced capitalism.

Sex is a powerful thing. This power, which likely arises in part by virtue of sex's necessarily pervasive presence in all societies (monastic and Shaker societies excepted), can be and has been made to serve a number of functions beyond what may be considered its biological scope of interpersonal pleasure and reproduction. The modern mass media have used the power that surrounds sex. It is commonly used as subject matter to increase consumption, as is the case not only in content that is classified as pornography or erotica, but in many mainstream motion pictures, television shows, books, and magazines. Sex is used to attract attention to advertisements, and as an incentive to heed their invitations to buy. But beyond these overt and readily recognizable manifestations of sex power are other, less apparent ones. One such manifestation is in the role television's representation of sex plays in addressing the motivational crisis tendency in advanced capitalism by motivating increased consumption of commodities by television viewers.

Television, arguably the most influential (or at least most attended to) medium of mass communication in the United States today, presents a consistent set of messages about sex that is seemingly inconsistent with what may be considered the traditional hegemonic stance towards sex. Numerous content analyses have shown that most of the messages about sex on television today convey a recreational orientation towards sexuality—the idea that sex is primarily a source of entertainment and physical enjoyment, and appropriately enjoyed with any consenting partner. While such a break with "traditional" mores is often interpreted as counter-hegemonic, the opposite is actually true. In fact, reinforcing a recreational orientation towards sex serves to strengthen the ideology of consumptive self-indulgence necessary for the continuation of capitalism in modern America.

Traditionally, analysis of hegemony pertaining to issues of sex and sexuality has led to conclusions that the hegemony or dominant ideology in Capitalist societies favors limiting sexual behaviors to heterosexual, state-sanctioned unions. Marcuse (1966) claims that the limitation of sexual expression actually constituted the original form of domination of humans by other humans—specifically of women and children by the father. Marcuse further argues that the limitation of sexual pleasure served to guarantee a secure, obedient labor force through a process of normalization of domination (p. 61). In a similar vein, Foucault (1984) argues that the hegemonic limitation of sexuality was initially motivated by an interest in maintaining a predictably-sized workforce through its attention to reproductive issues. Others have argued that such this limitation of sexuality served to provide stable, reliable workers; Hennessy (2000), for example, sees capitalism's relations of production as reliant on a home life marked by intra-familial division of labor based on marital, monogamous sex (p. 41). The argument is made that the individual worker, by being bound to his wife in a monogamous sexual relationship, was effectively placed in a social position that would be served by employment as a laborer. Furthermore, the laborer's capacity for labor would be effectively reproduced or nurtured by a wife (Hennessy, 2000, p. 64). Being bound to a family and a family's physical wants kept him bound to his job, monotonous though it might be, and made him effective at the performance of that job. It further placed requirements of consumption on the laborer, as he strove to meet the physical wants of his family.

Sex on TV today

Today, however, the mainstream media, whom we would expect to reinforce the dominant ideology in the last resort, consistently present sex in a light far different than that predicted by traditional critical analysis of the role of sex. First, it's sheer presence is inconsistent with the conservative, decorous absence such analysis would lead us to expect. The Kaiser Family Foundation's most recent content analysis of over one thousand network and cable television programs found that 68% of all programs contain some sexual content (Kunkel, Cope-Farrar, Biely, Farinola & Donnerstein, 2001). Such a massive presence seems inconsistent with the traditional limitation of sex to intimate marital relationships. Foucault (1984), in his discussion of sex, explains that discourse about sex functions to perpetuate body power, or power of and over the body. He argues that such discourse exerts power over the body and through the body, and though Foucault avows that such power exerts influence on everyone, he also alludes to the idea that it tends to serve the process of manufacture. The discourse on sexuality which Foucault argues will serve to perpetuate this power, however, is strikingly different from that which is common to television today; Foucault's body power results from the scientific, analytical scrutiny of sex, while television contains very little of such discourse. In fact, only 1% of the talk about sex observed in the KFF sample consisted of expert advice or technical information; another 6% consisted of talk about sex-related crimes. The remaining 93% focused on discussions about sex, past, present, or anticipated, largely by fictional characters (Kunkel et al., 2001). Rather than discussing and analyzing sex scientifically, television includes references to sex as entertainment.

Nor do these representations of sex on television serve to reinforce traditional or conservative attitudes towards sex. Content analyses have repeatedly found that the predominant trend in representations of sex on television is away from presenting sex as exclusive to marriage and primarily for procreation or spousal relationship building, and increasingly towards a focus on sex as a body-centered, pleasurably recreational activity. For example, content analyses indicate that most sexual intercourse depicted (shown or talked about) on television takes place between people not married to each other (Greenberg et al, 1993; Kunkel, Cope & Biely, 1999; Sapolsky & Tabarlet, 1991; Truglio, 1998).

One content analysis of sex talk on television found that the most common themes of sex talk revolve around this recreational orientation towards sex. These messages included the idea that sex is recreational and competitive, that men see women primarily as sexual objects, and value them based on their physical appearance, that men are sex-driven and always ready and willing to engage in sex, and that sex is a "fun, natural amusement for everyone, regardless of commitment or responsibility" (Ward, 1995; p. 562).

A specific and illuminating example can be found in examining the sexual decisions and actions of the characters in the popular comedic drama *Ally McBeal*. A superficial analysis seems to support fairly traditional sexual ideology—the show's central focus is Ally's quest for true love in the form of an ideal and lifelong partner. She is frequently and doggedly devoted to the idea of monogamy, as she is horrified when she kisses a married ex-boyfriend, and confused and disgusted when she discovers a coworker's mother plans to have an open marriage. Ally's friends do not mock her reverence for monogamous marriage, nor her quest for an ideal relationship of her own.

Ally also, in the course of three seasons, has auditioned at least as many men for the part of lifelong partner. In addition, she had what she described as the best, most raw and primal sex of her life with a complete stranger in a carwash, without even asking his name. When the stranger, whom, Ally learns, is her client's fiancé, Ally's, suggests that he might call off his marriage because of the sexual chemistry he experiences with Ally, she has sex with him again, and encourages him to go forward with his plans for marriage. Her commitment to an ideal of monogamous commitment, then, is obviously subjugated, in practice, to the demands of her immediate pleasure and gratification.

Other characters in the series display behaviors consistent with the findings of the quantitative content analyses discussed above. Ally's roommate, Rene, admits to participating in illicit affairs with a number of men. She meets a new colleague of Ally's at an office party and has sex with him on their first date. She continues to have sex with him even after she recognizes that he is not emotionally committed to her. While Rene does occasionally pay lip service to more conservative sexual ideals, by acknowledging, for instance, that having sex on a first date might be inappropriate, she often follows up some comments with enthusiastic accounts of the sexual encounter. Elaine, Ally's secretary, is a veritable embodiment of a recreational orientation towards sex. She is openly and enthusiastically sexual, has sex with men she does not intend to continue to date, and expresses strong sexual desire for men other than her dating partners. When others, generally minor characters, call Elaine's sexual practices into question, they are made to appear to be small-minded and foolish.

The principal male characters on *Ally McBeal* also serve as models of self-indulgent sexuality. John Cage solicits a prostitute and justifies it openly as a moral decision. Richard Fish openly celebrates shallow relationships based on money and sex. Billy leaves his wife, hires a bevy of scantily-clad models to follow him around, and seeks out a sexual relationship with his secretary. One of Ally's male colleagues is unsympathetically portrayed as backward and reactionary because he breaks up with his girlfriend when he discovers she is a transsexual, biological male and because he expects his girlfriend not to overtly express her sexual desire for other men.

The pattern, from both quantitative and subjective analysis, becomes clear. Rather than representing sex as appropriate only in marriage (and probably not terribly frequently therein if the matching twin beds of the Petries and Arnezes in the *Dick Van Dyke Show* and *I Love Lucy* are any indication), sex is seen as a source of universal pleasure, to be pursued with myriad partners outside marriage relationships. Many today would find no fault with such a finding. In some ways, this pattern seems to indicate progress. The women characters on *Ally McBeal*, for example, are definitely sexual agents, in control of their own bodies and sexuality. They do not subjugate their sexuality to men's, at least not overtly and consistently. They are not passive, but rather active objects of male attention. Thus, at least superficially, this frequent couching of sexual subject matter in a recreational orientation may seem to represent an escape from dominant ideology, or at least from an ideology of male dominance.

Such conclusions, however, may be premature. While the domination of women by men seems to be somewhat in abeyance in these examples, and while the domination of people's sexual selves by a restrictive ideology in general seems to have been overturned, we must ask whether any system of messages can exist outside of ideology. If it cannot, we must consider the ideological assumptions which underscore the present pattern of representations of sex on television. In fact, current depictions of sex on television seem to depict sex as a consumptive end product in and of itself.

It is this identification of sex as a consumable commodity that makes the ideological work performed by this consistent set of messages about sex consistent with the aims of the hegemony of advanced capitalism as it exists in the United States. The use of hegemony here refers to the overarching set of assumptions which serve to legitimate the dominant social order in any given society, or in other words, that which makes the structures and relations which serve to perpetuate that order natural-seeming. In order to understand how television's messages about sex serve to perpetuate this hegemony, we must first identify some core elements of the hegemony itself.

Consumption and Advanced Capitalism

Advanced capitalism relies on continuous consumption to survive. If capitalists are to continue to accumulate capital, people need to buy their products and put that capital into their hands. Capitalist hegemony, then, must serve to promote consumption. Lipsitz cites Gitlin's argument that "'What is hegemonic in consumer capitalist ideology is precisely the notion that happiness, or liberty, or equality, or fraternity can be affirmed through existing private commodity forms'" (1990, p. 55). In other words, all needs can be met through purchase or consumption of goods and services. This notion is referred to as consumerism. In fact, it is even argued that, under advanced capitalism, the freedom to select among a limited choice of goods or services for consumption has come to signify freedom itself (Nava, 1992). Equating freedom with consumption, however, is important only in that it serves to perpetuate consumption. Any belief which serves to perpetuate consumption will ultimately serve as an element of the hegemony of advanced capitalism.

Such perpetuation of consumption is far from assured. Habermas (1975) argues that the government/market steering mechanism of advanced capitalism will inevitably manifest "functional weaknesses" and "dysfunctional side effects" (p. 36). Lipsitz (1990) locates one such "functional weakness" in the sometime inability of government/market forces to inculcate the value of consumerism in the American people as a whole. While the purpose of Lipsitz's analysis is to address how a particular genre of television show served to address this weakness after the end of the Great Depression, it also serves as a demonstration that such a weakness can arise within the system. In fact, given that the primary economic motivator under capitalism is the accumulation of capital or wealth, it seems inevitable that consumerism will not arise naturally. After all, in order to consume, one must give up accumulation—you can't save the same money you spend. Due to this logical inconsistency, as one historical analysis puts it, "an ethic of consumption [must] be sold" (D'Emilio & Freedman, 1988, p. 276).

It is clear that this ethic is indeed sold through mass media channels today. Sut Jhally (1998), in his video critique of the advertising industry, *Advertising and the End of the World* argues that the principle message of all advertisements is the privileging of consumption (and hyper-consumerism) as a way of life. Advertisements promote the consumption of products as sources of pleasure and satisfaction, as well as of mechanisms for the facilitation of interpersonal relationships which will in turn provide additional satisfaction and happiness.

The individual products, Jhally (1998) argues, are of almost insignificant importance when compared to the overwhelming message of consumerism conveyed by the entire system of advertisements collectively.

In addition to identifying one weakness in the capitalist system, Lipsitz (1990) discusses how that weakness is addressed ideologically. Specifically, Lipsitz argues that television shows were created which encouraged the acceptance of consumerism by "identifying new products and styles of consumption with traditional, historically sanctioned practices and behaviors" (p. 47). By so doing, the media was able to fix the hegemonic assumptions of consumerism as a powerful element of American ideology. Historians acknowledge this "shift toward a consumer economy," and away from a production economy (D'Emilio & Freedman, 1988, p. 234). This shift is also amply demonstrated by the statistics offered by Lipsitz pertaining to the dramatic increase of home ownership, mortgage lending, private automobile purchases, and television purchases during and immediately following the life of the television programs he analyzes (p. 46).

The weakness identified by Lipsitz as occurring at the end of the Great Depression is what Habermas (1975) refers to as a motivational crisis. This crisis is "dysfunctional for the system of social labor" (p. 75) in that if individuals are not motivated to constantly consume goods and services, the relations of production fall apart. This is apparent when we consider the potential effects of a true boycott—without consumers/customers, capital is not accumulated and laborers can't be paid, which in turn leads to diminished consumption by those laborers of other commodities, and so on until the system falls apart. Habermas (1975) argues that "motivational structures necessary for bourgeois society are only incompletely reflected in bourgeois ideologies," and that capitalism has always been "dependent on motivationally effective supplementation" for the perpetuation of motivation (p. 76-7). This applies to motivations for consumption as well as production. Traditionally, according to Habermas, this supplementary motivation for production has been drawn from religion and tradition. This use, however, has eroded its very viability. Also, the traditional motivational needs of production, which tended to foster ascetism and nihilism, are essentially opposed to the motivational needs of consumption, which need to create self-indulgence and enjoyment of personal pleasure (D'Emilio & Freedman, 1988, p. 276). These factors together create a need for new sources of motivation.

One way in which consumption was increased for post-depression America was to separate consumers into smaller consuming units—the nuclear, rather than extended, family became the core unit of consumption (Lipsitz, 1990). A family bought a home, a car, and appliances for themselves as a nuclear unit. Individuals were taught to place their own needs and the needs of their immediate family above those of the community or even the extended family. This effectively increased consumption, by increasing the number of consuming units—rather than one car serving the needs of three siblings and their families who lived collectively, each sibling's family needed its own car; with an increased number of living units (each family needs its own home) came an increase in the number of furnishings to fill those living units.

Whereas post-depression Americans could be prompted to increase their consumption through family home and automobile ownership, today's consumers have grown up with such consumption. This does not, however, mean that the same strategy cannot be employed. By creating even smaller units of consumption—the individual—and promoting the ideological notion that all desires should be gratified, consumption can be increased further. This is how the need for motivation towards consumerism is addressed by the pattern of sexual content on television today. This is accomplished in two steps which, while separate, are carried out simultaneously. First, by depicting and reinforcing a recreational attitude towards sex, television programs promote the self-centered hedonism needed to identify and motivate the individual as a consuming unit. We here define hedonism as a focus on pursuing self-indulgent personal pleasure, even if that pursuit comes at the expense of other goals or may cause someone else to come to harm. Second, by depicting the sexual behaviors which constitute the overt manifestation of this hedonism in such a way that sex is identified in terms of exchange, the link between hedonism and consumerism is strengthened.

Sex on TV and Consumerism

We have already established through the findings of repeated content analysis as well as a closer look at a small sample of television content that television consistently depicts sex as recreational and self- and body-centered. Specific examples drawn from current television programs only serve to strengthen this observation. Consider again the episode of *Ally McBeal* in which the title character, a successful lawyer, has sex with a man she sees in the carwash—that is, she sees him in the carwash, then they have sex in the carwash. They do not speak during this encounter to discuss contraception, sexual history, or the potential threat of sexually transmitted disease. As she describes the experience to others, the screen shows flashbacks to the event itself, including close-ups of her face as she apparently experiences orgasm, and of various parts of her body being erotically touched by her partner and by Ally herself. In the ensuing episodes, she meets this sexual partner again. After a brief conversation during which they both articulate the reasons, primarily pertaining to the complete lack of any emotional or psychological commitment between the two of them and his engagement to another woman, why they should never have sex again, they have sex again. Ultimately, he marries his fiancé, and Ally and he are left with fond memories and no consequences. The only justification given for the first sexual encounters is that the two characters felt attracted to each other. The second is justified by the pleasure each took in the first encounter. The message is clear: indulge your own wants, regardless of potential consequences to others.

To provide insight into the ideological work related to consumerism performed by such content, let us substitute, for a moment, an alternative commodity, say a piece of candy, for the sexual encounter. When Ally sees the piece of candy, without knowing precisely what it is or where it's been, she consumes it. She does this without first ascertaining the cost or considering the values—it may be poisonous, it may be drugged, it may be tremendously expensive, but none of this matters. She must indulge her desire. Later, she evaluates this behavior and recognizes that, while she enjoyed the candy tremendously, she should never consume it again because it is, in some ways, bad. Yet when the candy is next available, based on the recollection of the pleasure she experienced eating the first candy, she eats it again, once again failing to ascertain or consider the cost or consequences. Regardless of cost, she must buy it and eat it.

A similar message is reflected in an encounter depicted on the show *Felicity*. One of the regulars on the show meets a woman to whom he is attracted. She is married, but tells him that she wants to have an affair with him. He assents, and meets her in a hotel room where they have sex. She justifies this by saying, "'I am an adult'" and excusing her partner from any responsibility in the affair (Kunkel 2001, p. 25). By participating in the affair, the young man affirms her reasoning that adult individuals should indulge or satisfy their desires in spite of any consequences to others. The want of the individual is indulged regardless of cost.

Nor is this message limited to individual events in single episodes of a few shows. Nearly every episode of *Friends* during the 1999-2000 season devoted significant time to the ongoing sexual relationship between Monica and Chandler, and their other friends' discovery of this relationship. While the latter part of the season finds them increasingly aware of mutual romantic feelings, during the first half of the season their relationship is strictly sexual. They have sex with each other because the sex they have had is "the best [each has] ever had." When they publicly declare their love for each other for the first time, their friends, who had approved of the relationship all along, expressed surprise that there was a romantic/emotional basis for the relationship. One put it particularly succinctly when she said, "I didn't know you were in love; I thought you were just doing it." This same character, in another episode, convinces a man she is casually dating that they can have sex without any kind of commitment to each other. Instead, she describes sex as something two people can enjoy with each other just for the moment.

Ultimately, then, the recreational orientation towards sex depicted so frequently on television supports the notion that an individual should pursue or accept sexual pleasure whenever it is available, without consideration for commitment or consequences to others. This is, according to our earlier definition, sexual hedonism, or the self-indulgent pursuit of sexual pleasure irrespective of consequences. To a certain extent, this hedonism may constitute motivation in and of itself.

Though framed in terms of indulging sexual desires, the attitudes of self-indulgence promoted by such television messages may well be generalizable into non-sexual valuing of self-indulgence which could then be applied to other domains; specifically, it may lead to economic and cosumptive self-indulgence. D'Emelio and Freedman (1988) allow for the possibility of such a crossover when they hypothesize that the ethic of consumerism may be "easily translated to the province of sex" (p. 234). If such a translation can occur, it is reasonable to assume that the converse may also occur, with hedonistic attitudes towards sex being translated to the province of consumption.

For the most part, however, the depiction of the self-indulgent pursuit of sexual pleasure, is not enough in and of itself to provide the motivation to consume required by the motivational crisis of consumption faced by modern America. This only comes about as associations between sex and commodity forms are made, again through the medium of television programs.

Sex on TV as a commodity

The connection between sex and commodification or consumption on television is not always obvious. After all, the most blunt aspect of sex as a commodity is prostitution, and we do not see a burgeoning celebration or even depiction of prostitution on television today. One content analysis has shown that references to prostitution constitute less than 20% of the sex talk on soap operas and prime-time television programs (Greenberg 1993). Further, the same analysis showed found no visual representation of prostitution. While this is not universally the case (HBO's *Sopranos*, for example, has depicted prostitutes plying their trade), the overall pattern seems to be to *not* depict prostitution as a normal, important part of television's sexual content.

While the literal commodification of sex in the form of prostitution is not common on television today, many subtler strategies of commodification are at work. In their history of American sexuality, D'Emilio and Freedman (1988) cite the growth in the twentieth century of industries which "rested upon sexual desire" such as the cosmetics industry which relies on specific notions of sexual attraction, and film industries, which have always used sex as a principle subject of their wares, and the multi-billion dollar pornography industry. Further commodification of sex has taken place through industries in which sex, while not the foundation of the industry, serves as an important element of their products. These industries include metropolitan newspapers which contain romance columns, the advertising industry, which spreads seductive images and double-entendres throughout the media, and even publishers of popular fiction (p. 277). In each of these examples, sex is the content which creates value for commodity items. Perhaps the strongest ties connecting sex to notions of commodity and consumption, however, do not fit this form of commodification of sex as content, but occur rather when the sex act itself is figured subtly, yet still literally, as a commodity as is often the case in television today.

Sex is commodified as it is consistently depicted on television as a reward or incentive for other behaviors, and therefore the object of a purchase-like exchange or transaction—in other words, a commodity. Identifying sex as a reward or incentive is sometimes done in a playful manner which might be read as teasing or playing. Such is often the case with Mrs. Foreman on *That Seventies Show* and Jill Taylor on *Home Improvement*; each implies that her husband will be rewarded sexually if he accedes to her wishes, and that sex will be withheld if he does not. Clearly, the pattern implied to exist in these relationships is one in which sex is "purchased" with those behaviors desired by the wife.

Though this playful tone might give viewers an excuse to interpret this commodification of sex as fictitious, articulated for purposes of comedy only rather than reflecting the actual nature of the relationship being depicted, there always seems to be a note of seriousness underlying these women's claims. For example, one episode of *That Seventies Show* deals with Mrs. Forman's (the protagonist's mother's) attempts to increase the degree of romance in her marriage. She insists that her husband take her to a hotel for the weekend for a romantic getaway. He, of course, is surly and reluctant. At the end of the episode, however, Mrs. Foreman receives a delivery of flowers and champagne from her husband. Upon seeing this gift, she immediately abandons the troubled neighbor she had been comforting and rushes to join her husband in their nearby hotel room to have sex. Even if we laugh at the idea of exchanging sexual favors for specific wanted behaviors or gifts, we see that such exchanges occur.

Other times, the exchange value of sex is more earnestly and overtly avowed to. One such case is depicted on *Dawson's* Creek when Joey, a young woman long committed to maintaining her virginity, finally decides to have sex with her boyfriend, Pacey. Somewhat surprised by his girlfriend's change of heart, Pacey asks if her willingness is a reward for his recent rejection of another woman's sexual advances. Joey responds that it is not; rather, it is a reward for half a dozen other things that Pacey has done for her during the course of their relationship, such as helping her with her luggage. She pays him for his kindness with sex. Another unambiguous instance of this commodification of sex is depicted on *Will and Grace* when Karen, a married, middle-aged woman, describes each piece of jewelry she owns in terms of the sexual act performed for her husband for which that piece was a reward ("On my knees in Belize, etc..."). Each sexual encounter, then, is figured as an exchange, thus commodifying sex itself.

This overt commodification extends to homosexual sexual exchanges as well. In an episode of the relatively new police drama *The Shield*, a homosexual prisoner asks a police officer whom he believes also to be homosexual to check into his case, possibly securing an early release. Despite warnings from his superiors, the officer checks into the case, and the prisoner is released early. As he leaves, he asks the officer for his phone number, and expresses his wish to "pay [the officer] back" sometime. At the end of the episode, the officer visits the prisoner's apartment, the two kiss, and disappear into the apartment as they caress each other. Obviously, the officer's payment consists of sex.

It is not enough, of course, that such messages be conveyed by the media. In order to serve to motivate increased consumption, they must become hegemonic, or natural-seeming; they must subject individuals to their ideology. Hennessy refers to this need when she argues that "the growth of consumer culture has depended on the formation and continual retooling of a desiring subject, a subject who honors pleasures and may even see them as forces that drive one's existence" (2000, p. 69). The process by which individuals become "desiring subjects", or by which the notions of hedonism and sex-as-commodity become natural or hegemonic, can be understood by an appeal to Althusser's notion of interpellation. Interpellation occurs, according to Althusser (1971), when an ideology hails or addresses a concrete individual; when the individual responds, she or he subjects himself to that ideology, or becomes a subject, by the act of response itself. The interpellation in this case occurs as the individual views television. The viewer's response to that hail takes the form of reaction to the sexual representations on television, including a range of reactions from a vague enjoyment of a program in which these notions are contained to enjoyment of a humorous reference to sex as a reward to arousal in response to the sometimes graphic depictions of sexual behaviors. In reaction, the viewer becomes also a subject to the ideology

These two aspects of television's representation of sex, as a self- and body-centered pursuit for all to enjoy without consequences and as a commodity with exchange value, work together to serve the ends of motivation required by advanced capitalism. The viewer is ideologically encouraged to accept hedonism, including its self-centered bases, as natural. When fully accepted, this ideology leads the viewer/subject to pursue individual pleasure and satisfaction regardless of consequences to others. Furthermore, since this ideology was inculcated through the representation of a commodified behavior (sex), the viewer/subject is led to pursue this pleasure and satisfaction through commodity forms.

We shall consider what this means at the level of consumption through a final comparison to post-depression consumers. The primary unit of consumption in the post-depression era was figured by television shows as the nuclear family—the family bought a home or a car, went to dinner together, and so forth. A man was depicted as a failure if he did not provide adequate commodities for his family (Lipsitz, 1990). Under the current ideology of hedonism, the individual, not the family, is the primary unit of consumption—married individuals seek personal pleasure without regard for spouse or family, or purchase sex from their spouse with compliant behavior. Rather than the family functioning as a unit of consumption, then, the modern hedonistic ideology of consumerism reinforced by television's representation of sex positions the individual as the unit of consumption. Instead of a family car, each individual in the family who can drive needs a car; individual living spaces, whether established separately as independent houses or apartments or as rooms within a family home, must be filled with goods that serve personal pleasure. Rather than a television set and stereo for the family, each individual wants her or his own television set and stereo. With this multiplication of consuming units comes an increase in consumption. Add to this the increasing strength of the assumption held by each of those consuming units that indulging one's own pleasure is not only acceptable but moral, and the needs of motivation in advanced capitalism are met.

This does not mean that all sex on television is negative, or that all sex on television serves the same ideological function. Indeed, given that the media are cited as one of the most common sources of sexual information for adolescents (Cantor, Mares & Hyde, 2001), its entire absence from television may be as great a cause for concern as its current prolific presence, though for entirely different reasons. The judicious use of sex can inform and enlighten, enrich story lines and characters, and counter stereotypes. But for the most part, the ideological work performed by the representation of sex on television will depend largely on the nature of that representation. The representations of sex that stand to perform such positive ideological work—those that occur within long-standing, deeply committed relationships, with consequences that are realistic and often ambivalent—are scarce on television today. Instead, the most common types of representation are problematic. Sex is used strictly to sell a program or product, and is thereby commodified. Sex is discussed as a reward or incentive for other behavior, and is again commodified. Sex is presented as a pleasure to be indulged in selfishly, casually, and without regard for consequences, and thereby promotes consumerism.

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The Site of Coverage: The Impact of Internet-Mounted Social Movement Protests on Journalists' Coverage Decisions

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Abstract: Situated within the critical paradigm, this study uses quantitative and qualitative techniques to examine (a) the use of the Internet as a journalistic tool and (b) the impact of such use on journalists' decisions in their coverage of social movement protests. This study analyzes these dynamics in the context of the recent anti-globalization protests in U.S. cities and abroad, which are generally regarded as major success-stories in reference to the role of the Internet in their organization and propagation.

---Sonora Jha-Nambiar

Introduction:

Although news practices have been studied for several years with growing specialization and through the lens of varied theories, there has been minimal work done on the impact on journalists' practices -- and through those, their coverage -- with the entry of a new medium/tool that not is not merely seen to enhance the public sphere but also substantially alter journalists' own routines.

It is of some significance when journalists begin to employ a tool such as the Internet, which they see as increasing their speed and efficiency, particularly since these are the two attributes that are seen to be at a premium in the production of daily news. As a result, there has been considerable interest in recent years into information-seeking by the media through the Internet. As more and more journalists begin to use the Internet to access information for their professional use, attitudes toward such use within the media have seen a gradual shift.

One of the biggest surveys of journalists' Internet use in the United States (Middleberg and Ross, 2000), conducted annually since 1994, has chronicled the rapid increase in Internet use by journalists and the gradual shifts in attitude towards such use. Based on 4,000 responses to 40,000 survey forms mailed, the latest survey finds that journalists' use of the Internet is at an all time high in every category, across the board. Reporters' and editors' use of the Internet to research stories, find new sources, receive press releases and information, update breaking news, interview sources and engage in dialogue with readers has reached record-levels. According to the survey, 98% of the journalists who responded said that they're online at least once a day to check e-mail and spend 15 hours a week reading and sending e-mail.

Another study of Internet use in the British media (Nicholas et al, 2000) found use to be light; mostly amongst a handful of journalists with access to the Internet, and mostly of a fact-checking nature with a preference for official sites. This study, however, was conducted between 1997-98 and given the swift advance of Internet use worldwide, a substantial increase and change is likely to have resulted since.

There is a need for research into this area to now progress into how such use plays out in the final product of the journalist -- the media story -- and the decisions that surround it. Eric Fredin (2001) has pointed to one direct, observable output - the expanded use of hypermedia links within news stories accessed through the web, which allows readers to make several ''digressions'' and display different frames of understanding.

There is very little qualitative research, however, into whether such online information-seeking in the media results in any change in the coverage journalists give to the subject of their search. This study, therefore, provides exploratory research into this very area and forms a part of a larger research agenda into the role of the Internet in a democracy. As one of the first efforts to investigate how journalists respond to a news story armed with greater access -- through the Internet -- to multiple channels of sourcing, information and research, this study also seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of whether journalistic routines and news values/judgments change with such enhanced access.

This paper locates itself in the context of one such media story, the anti-globalization protests that unfolded in Seattle, Washington, in November 1999 and were followed up with more protests in Washington D.C. and Quebec City the following year. This is a particularly good case for such empirical examination since Internet websites, listserves, and email were used to bring together dispersed and diverse constituents in unprecedented numbers, which played into some significant media frames (Epstein, 1973; Entman, 1993; Gamson & Modigliani,1989;Gitlin, 1985; Pan & Kosicki, 1991; Jamieson & Campbell, 1997; Reese, 1997) and garnered extensive media coverage.

Literature:

In its focus on journalistic practices, this study draws on literature that examines the sociology of news production. Given that the motivation for this study is within the context of the use of the Internet as a journalistic tool and how this shapes the relationship between the media and social movements, particularly with regard to the framing of social movements in the media, this literature also draws on the consistent, inter-disciplinary theoretical and empirical work done in that area.

Academic research into the sociology of news production concludes, for one, that journalists ''construct'' the news (Molotch & Lester,1974; Tuchman, 1978). The processes that they follow for such manufacture of news brings into use several resources, or, tools. For one, journalists tend to rely on sources -- official rather than unofficial ones - for their news. The hierarchy thus represented in news tends to reflect the hierarchy in government and society (Gans, 1979; Fishman, 1980; Sigal; Cohen, 1963).A variety of sources might be ''accessible'' but only a few are considered to be ''suitable.'' Nimmo (1978) suggests that contrary to the view of journalists gathering news like a child plucking pansies from the meadow, political news is jointly created by journalists who assemble and report events and the politicians, professionals and spokespersons who promote them. Sigal (1973) suggests that newsmen adhere to routine channels of news-gathering and thereby leave much of the task of selection of news to its sources.

Gans (1979) notes that source considerations come into play at the start of the story selection, when the story itself is unfamiliar but the sources are familiar and can be evaluated. He lists six major source considerations: past suitability, productivity, reliability, trustworthiness, authoritativeness and articulateness.

About the different roles that reporters play which in turn impacts their coverage, Gans suggests that beat reporters tend to have symbiotic relationships with their sources and contacts while general assignment reporters have little prior knowledge of the story and the sources it involves, although they tend to approach beat reporters for a list of sources and opinions on their reliability. Even these general reporters rarely interview ordinary people on the site of their coverage and organizations that are ''resource-poor'' have problems gaining coverage (Goldenberg, 1975; Piven & Cloward, 1979). Gans recounts how, at anti-war demonstrations and at a civil rights march, television reporters would seek out unusual participants but ignored the rank and file demonstrators. The other aspect of significance with regard to the kinds of reporters is that, as Lee Seigelman (1973) suggests, general reporters move quickly from story to story and reporters covering emotionally charged stories are rotated often.

The other major area of research into journalistic practice is centered around the notion of ''news values.'' Stuart Hall (1973) says of news values that even though journalists speak of 'the news' as if events select themselves, there is ''a 'deep structure' whose function as a selective device is un-transparent even to those who professionally must know how to operate it.'' Gans refers to these as enduring values, which are blind to possible structural faults within the system, which in turn reduces the likelihood of stories that question the legitimacy of the present economic order.These values tie in with the concept of ''story suitability.'' Stories are deemed suitable, Gans says, by the nature of their relationship with rank in governmental and other hierarchies; impact on the nation and the national interest; impact on large numbers of people and significance for the past and future. In making their judgments, journalists employ exclusionary considerations that take into account the power of the newsmaker. Less powerful newsmakers, Gans suggests, must resort to conflict or violence to depict disagreement. Therefore, more peaceful protests were ignored during late 1960s, the days when protests were frequent and charged, and then, during the 1970s, when protests began to fade, the staging of the occasional protest itself became an indicator of the importance.

Drawing distinctions between important stories and interesting stories, Gans points out that one important thing they have in common is that journalists do not think about the audience when selecting either but rely instead on a handful of story types: people stories; role reversals; human-interest; expose anecdotes; hero stories and ''Gee whiz'' stories.

Journalists, steeped in the self-constructed ideology of objectivity (Gans, 1979; Tuchman, 1972; Schudson, 1978) resist a shift in their opinions for fear of losing credibility and change their opinions only in the case of some highly visible and traumatic events -- the Tet offensive during the Vietnam war is one such example (Gans, 1979; Hallin, 1986) When such visible events change journalists' opinions, says Gans, the events themselves are made highly visible by journalists.

A study by Weaver and Wilhoit (1996) found, however, that journalists believed the interpretive/investigative function to be an essential for a journalist. They saw this approach as involving three important roles: investigating government claims, interpreting and analyzing complex problems, and discussing public policy in a timely way.

Another finding of this study was the emergence of a new cluster of roles that tied in with the ''populist mobilizer'' function that some journalists now seek to serve. This involves developing interests of the public, providing entertainment, setting the political agenda, and letting ordinary people express views. The last of these four microroles,-- letting ordinary people express views -- however, did not feature as strongly as the first three.

Journalists also value the ''disseminator function'' in which they see the two key roles as being ''getting stories to the public quickly and avoiding unverifiable facts.'' (Weaver and Wilhoit,1996,p.138). In the 1990s, the American journalist showed greater concern about avoiding unverifiable facts, which, Weaver and Wilhoit believe, may have reflected the resurgence of concern over anonymous sources.

A significant finding in the Weaver and Wilhoit study was that only a small minority of journalists see themselves as performing an adversary function, which involves being skeptical of public officials and business interests. The study found this to be true even of the more visible, national journalists in the larger urban areas of the north-east, which is where the more critical, adversarial journalists are believed to operate.

Gans points out, for instance, that disorder news is affected by whose order is being upset. The Vietnam war protests were covered because they were against presidents and the 1978 coal strike became a magazine cover-story only when it involved the president. Moreover, social disorder stories, such as marches and demonstrations, are depicted by the media as they tend to be concerned with the ''restoration of order''.(Gans, 1973, p. 54). Gitlin cites Levy (1980, p. 267) on how one study showed that viewers tuning into mainstream news found in it a reassurance in it that the world both near and far was safe and secure and demanded no immediate action on their part.

How, then, do social movements that do not have recourse to news organizational and ideological pathways, frame their protest? Areas of activity for social movement organizations include framing movement agendas, cultivating collective identities, and mobilizing collective actions (Gamson and Wolfsfeld, 1993; Smith 2001; Watkins, 2001). Organizing by networking and communications such as the Internet facilitates, becomes particularly crucial in the case of transnational advocacy networks. They have, in fact, been described as ' ' communicative structures for political exchange' '(Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p.217)

Another study found that newsletters, news items and organizational information were the chief kinds of information disseminated by non-profit environmental organizations over the Internet (Zelwietro, 1998). ' 'These communication networks (websites, listservs, bulletin boards and email in the Seattle anti-WTO protests) allow organizers to almost instantaneously transmit alternative media accounts and images of protests to contrast those of mainstream, corporate-owned media outlets' '(Smith, 2001)

Does the power of the Internet as a political and communication tool circumvent the relevance of the mainstream mass media? Research and practice suggest not, in spite of the repressive political economy even of the ''free'' media. A key element of ''political opportunity structure'' (Tarrow, 1996) is the use of the mass media. ' 'Media norms and practices and the broader political economy under which they operate affect the opportunities and constraints under which (social) movements operate'' (Gamson and Meyer, 1996).

The problem that social movement groups or non-governmental organizations face in America is when they try to mobilize and confront capitalist democracy in America, which is strengthened and kept in place by American institutions (Costain & Mc Farland, 1998; Lichbach, 1998). One such institution is the mainstream, corporate-controlled media (Bagdikian 2000; Chomsky 1991; Chomsky 1997; Herman and Chomsky, 1988; Herman and McChesney 1997)

The mainstream media, however, gain particular importance in the ''network information politics'' of transnational advocacy networks (Keck and Sikkink, 1998, p.228) Network activists cultivate credibility with the press and package their information in a timely and dramatic way to draw press attention (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). Novelty, polemic, confrontation and controversy are the frames that win media attention to social movement (Gamson and Meyer, 1996) Media strategies of interest groups have a history from the popularity of ' 'boilerplates'' (a plate containing a story of general interest that could be placed directly on a printing press without further typesetting) in the 1920s to position papers in the 1970s to weblinks in the 2000s.

For persuading and mobilizing the public, media are used directly (advertising with Image ads or Advocacy ads) or, particularly in the case of citizens' groups, indirectly (cultivating the media, attracting media attention through written or video-taped press releases and, especially, protests and demonstrations, especially for organizations with their roots in social movements, (Scholzman and Tierney, 1986).

Even groups that circumvent a focus on garnering mainstream media attention do sometimes provide hypertext links and information as press releases on their websites (Smith and Smythe, 1999). The Zapatista movement in Mexico used the Internet for everything from voting in plebiscites by participants from 47 countries to drawing in the mainstream media to create awareness and outrage worldwide (Cleaver, Jr., 1998). The architects of the Million Man March in 1995 sought media attention. For instance, organizers planned a year in advance, recruited celebrity spokespersons, conducted press conferences, and scheduled the event for maximum coverage. Still, while the creators of protest movements can (mis)behave in ways that demand the media spotlight they have very little power over how intense the spotlight will shine or what it will selectively illuminate (Gitlin, 1980).

On the other hand, the protests and demonstrations orchestrated by these social movement organizations often serve to provide crucial alternative sources of information from mainstream media frames. (Smith 2001; Smith and Smythe, 1999.) In the Seattle anti-WTO protests, rather than rely on mainstream media for awareness-generation, activists devised an ''Independent Media Center'' in Seattle with volunteer photographers, video recorders and reporters documenting the movement and protests and posting them on the protest website (Smith, 2001).There is a perception, however, that with the growing number of communication sources, there may be greater public reliance on some central sources to reduce complexity, help users make judgments about what is important and build shared beliefs (Schultz, 2000). This would mean that the mainstream media would be far from redundant.

Research Questions:

This study attempts to answer two basic research questions. First, do journalistic practices and news values undergo any change when they use the Internet as a tool for their coverage? Second, did the mounting of the anti-globalization protests and issue-debates over the Internet impact the way journalists covered the protests and issues before, during and after the actual staging of the protests?

Methods:

This study's design involved two stages. Stage one -- a survey research - was designed to be a backdrop to stage two -- in-depth qualitative interviews. In stage one, a short questionnaire was distributed to journalists at the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) convention held in Seattle in October 2001. The questionnaire collected data on their Internet use and some demographic data. This provided a current and topical analysis of Internet use, which is particularly pertinent given the rapid advances in the nature and perceptions of such use amongst journalists. Simple, closed-ended questions included:

1.A *rank-ordering question* on the usefulness of the Internet to the journalist. The choices were — story ideas; research on stories; finding contact addresses and telephone number; increased mobility (you can file your stories from almost anywhere); access to other publications and news alerts; conducting interviews via email, and, ''other:''

2.A *multiple-choice question* with a five-point Likert response scale to measure the extent of Internet use by the journalist. (' 'While working, you are personally logged on to the Internet, whether attentively or otherwise…all the time/most of the time/occasionally/rarely/never)

3.Five *dichotomous-response questions* (yes; no; don't know) asking respondents whether the Internet has: made them a better-informed professional; improved the quality of their stories; caused an overload of information for journalists; made journalists vulnerable to information and sources that are suspect; achieved the status of a serious journalistic tool, and whether the journalists were more likely to respond to a press release delivered online.

Despite the fact that this was a convenience sample and the questionnaire was short, the analysis of the 54 completed responses from amongst a pool of around 100 journalists, informed an area of research which is only just emerging and in which not much previous research exists. Moreover, as stated earlier, it served to provide a backdrop to the second part of the research design, the in-depth qualitative interviews.

In stage two, the primary method for this study, telephone interviews lasting between 45 minutes to 1.5 hours were conducted from January-March 2002. The pool of 14 journalists was selected after a search on Lexis-Nexis for journalists from different media who had covered/organized coverage of the anti-globalization protests in Seattle, Washington,D.C., and Quebec City. This method of non-probability purposive sampling (Singleton and Straits, 1999) reflected the kind of variation in media, beats, geographical location and seniority that is called for in this kind of exploratory study into this significant, emerging area of mass communication.

Qualitative Interviewing : According to Lindlof (1995) qualitative interviewing enables researchers to learn about things that cannot be observed directly by other means, verifying, validating or commenting on data obtained from other sources. This study used in-depth, personal respondent interviews conducted and audio-taped on telephone, in order to access individual perceptions and experiences about the coverage of social movement protests and the role of the Internet in shaping these.

While content and textual analyses may be the methodologies to employ to inquire into the nature of coverage, this study's focus was on journalists' perceptions, decisions, practices and residual impact, if any, on the coverage of anti-globalization protests and issues and the qualitative interviewing method was best suited to approaching these. Furthermore, no other qualitative interviewing format -- ethnographic, informant, respondent, narrative, and focus group (Lindlof, 1995) -- was considered suitable for inquiring into the more sensitive areas of journalists' views on matters such as objectivity and organizational norms and attitudes. A focus group --as opposed to the privacy accorded by the one-on-one conversational format of the in-depth telephone interviews -- might have distorted the data collection process.

In keeping with the recommendations of Lofland and Lofland (1995) to structure the interview guide to facilitate ' 'guided conversations,' ' the respondents were asked for open-ended responses to a series of directive questions. According to Lindlof (1995), the respondent interview has a standardized protocol and high content comparability and all interviewees are asked roughly the same questions in nearly the same order, which helps minimize interviewer effects and achieves greater efficiency of information gathering. The interviews were audio-taped for later analysis, allowing a freer, conversational flow to the interviews. Participants were assured confidentiality and this was maintained by avoiding any mention of the respondents' names in the audio-taped interviews or transcriptions. In the 'Analysis' section of this paper, respondents have been described by the nature of their media and their function in the organization, both of which are general enough to preclude any identification.

The questions were roughly divided into three sets -- on the journalists' Internet use, particularly for facilitating the coverage of social issues and protests; on social movement protests in general; on their journalistic routines, particularly sourcing and news judgments and any perceived impact on these following the anti-globalization protests and the availability of an Internet interface for their coverage.

For the first set, the journalists were asked about their knowledge of an online source of information/ websites maintained by anti-globalization activists; whether the journalists knew whom to contact for the activists' viewpoints; what kind of information journalists looked for on these websites; the usefulness of the sites; interactions with and opinions about the ' 'independent media centers' ' set up by activists and, the use and usefulness of the protest organizations' websites today

For the second set the journalists were asked whether they had covered social movements protests before the anti-globalization protests; their description and perceptions of the anti-globalization protests; their perceptions of their audience's/the American public's attitude toward social protest and civil disobedience and, their own attitude toward social movement protests before and after their coverage of the anti-globalization protests.

For the third set, journalists was asked a series of general and specific questions about: their sources (not for names but for general categories, eg. economists, law enforcement officials, activists, website contacts) before, during and after the protests; their story angles and the circumstances that dictated these choices; any follow-up stories or thematic stories in the months and years after the anti-globalization protests, and, whether, if they could make any change to the way their coverage turned out, what would it be?

Social science researchers value the evolving nature of qualitative research which enriches the data-gathering by allowing for the addition and revision of questions as the interviews proceed (Lofland and Lofland,1995).Such an evolution enhanced the content and data-gathering techniques of the interviews in this study.

Results

The survey questionnaire data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages.

The journalists showed high Internet use (See Table 'A'). A total of 68.5% of the respondents reported that while at work, they stayed logged on to the Internet(whether attentively or not) all the time or most of the time. While 27.8% of them said that they were occasionally logged on, not a single respondent replied ''rarely'' or ''never.''

Regarding the categories of usefulness of the Internet to them (See Table 'C'), the journalists reported finding it most useful for ''research''—74.1% of the respondents ranked ''research'' as most important. Usefulness for finding contact addresses and phone-numbers was considered the most important use of the Internet by 57.4% of the respondents (there was overlapping in some responses as respondents ranked some of the categories as being equally important).

What is quite significant is that barely 14.9% of the respondents found the Internet useful for generating story ideas. A large majority of the respondents (87%) found the Internet to be least useful for conducting interviews (via email). They were approximately evenly divided on the usefulness of the Internet for access to other publications and receiving news alerts (34.5% found it most important; 24.1% found it somewhat important and 32.6% found it less important). A majority (64.9) found the Internet to be less important in increasing their mobility. Journalists were also divided on whether they would respond better to press releases delivered online -- 27.8% replied ''yes''; 51.9% replied ''no'' and 20.4% replied ''don't know.'' (See Table 'D')

An important finding was that 75.9% of the respondents considered the Internet as having come to be considered a serious journalistic tool (see Table 'E'). While 18.5% did not think so, 5.6% chose to say ''don't know''.Another important finding is that 79.6% of the respondents believed that the Internet had improved the quality of their stories and 94.4% believed that it had made them better-informed professionals.Yet, 68.5% believed that it had made journalists vulnerable to information that is suspect and 59.3% believed that it had caused an overload of information for journalists.

From a qualitative perspective, the analysis of the interview data had a rich, creative and evolving context.It is in the nature of qualitative studies that the design, data collection and analysis stages are not rigidly separated (Lofland and Lofland, 1995). The data were continually compared to previous data as they were being recorded and transcribed.This allowed for a useful and meaningful development of concepts and interpretation over the three months of the interview process

Analysis of the interview data involved several processes: discovery, coding and exclusion of irrelevant data. After every two interviews were completed, the data was examined for emerging themes, patterns, repetition, commonalities or novelty in responses. Coding was done by constructing typologies or classification systems whereby the data could be separated into one of several defined categories. Nine broad data classification systems or typologies emerged for the analysis: the usefulness of the Internet; the usefulness of Internet elements like listservs, bulletin boards and websites for coverage of anti-globalization protests; news values, judgments and processes employed during the protest coverage; perceptions of the nature of protests and protesters; perceptions of their readers'/audiences attitude to social movement protests/civil disobedience; perceptions of themselves as journalists and of objectivity as a norm; perceptions of ''independent/alternative media'' used by protesters; perceptions of their own medium/organization with regard to such coverage and, finally, possibilities of raised/sustained interest and engagement in coverage of globalization/anti-globalization events and issues.

The following are the descriptions of the journalists (care has been taken to preserve confidentiality) and in some of the quotes that appear below, shorter descriptions have been used. These general identifications help in contextualizing the observations to enrich the understanding of the subtler differences in perceptions across a range of media, beats, organizational roles and assignments:

Assignment Editor, national cable television news network (Assignment Ed, Cable TV); Correspondent, national cable television news network (Correspondent, Cable TV); Environmental Correspondent, Seattle television station; Correspondent, Seattle daily; Correspondent, Washington-based daily; Business Correspondent, Washington daily; Business Correspondent, Boston daily; Editorial director, national cable television network-affiliated online news website (Ed. Dir., Online news); Correspondent, national cable television network-affiliated online news website (Correspondent, Online news); Correspondent, National radio station; Correspondent, Canadian daily; Political correspondent, Seattle daily; Economics writer, Washington-based daily and Business correspondent, Washington-based daily.

Regarding the use of the Internet, every journalist interviewed spoke enthusiastically about it but a number of them were skeptical about websites maintained by social movement activists.

Assignment Ed., Cable TV:*Right now, sometimes we first go to the Internet. . . every organization seems to have one.*

Ed. Dir., Online news:*(What's most important is)speed and the ability to find what you're looking for in ways that ordinary research methods do not allow. . . key in search terms and track a person down*

Correspondent, Washington-based daily:*I would suspect that one of the first things reporters do when they have to figure out a subject that's new to them. . . you presume there's a website. . . usually you're right…for any cause or any issue…20 years ago, we would still have got the information but it would have taken so much longer.*

Correspondent, Cable TV: *I tend to go to use the Internet to get information from groups or sources that I would go to get info from* *anyway…It's wonderful for getting trade stats from the government. . . for getting research papers from think tanks like the Economics Policy Institute…I know their website, I know the people there…. I don't go generally doodling around just coz some jerk's set up a website somewhere…a digital soapbox and somebody's spouting off on it.*

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:
My observation is that the whole online world was a very important outlet for (a) the alternative media and (b) the protest community to talk to one another…I think there was a huge amount of organizing done online…there was a lot of published accounts. . . some of them frankly I thought erroneous but who cares?. . . (laughing) I didn't have much time to digest all that.

Correspondent, Seattle daily:
Just the whole experience with the anti-WTO protests made me use the Internet much more.

Business correspondent, national daily: *At various points we wrote that one of the reasons it was possible for indigenous people of Latin America for example to make contact with steel workers from Pennsylvania…was because some of them had been very aggressive in using the Internet to link people.*

Assignment editor at national television cable network:
They had some bulletin boards to just see the amount of traffic and you can see the kind of sophistication that goes into the website and that

led us to believe that it (the protest) was going to be of a large size. Now I have Internet sites bookmarked… we used to use them for both logistics and position statements. Of course, we also used the pro-globalization websites.

Correspondent, online news:

It was useful to get basic information about groups' positions and contact information. But I don't recall what the sites looked like, whether I quoted them or provided links to them in my stories.

Correspondent, national TV:

We were not interested in referring people to polemicists on either side.

Another significant finding is that journalists relied on their traditional news judgments and news values, and sourcing strategies to decide on whether and how to cover the protests.

Assignment Ed., TV:…*An editor used to tell me that quantity has a quality all its own…if a demonstration is big enough, regardless of the cause, you must take notice....if a million people show up in D.C., regardless of the reason -- to celebrate the 4th of July or to protest the war in Vietnam -- you're going to take notice and you should take notice…but there's no policy book that would tell us what to cover or not.*

Correspondent, national daily:

Our goal was not to cover too many things but summarize for readers…give the bigger picture…' 'Seattle was shut down today for the third straight day.

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:
We don't cover all protests…people chaining themselves to trees… the first time that happened, we did, the tenth time we didn't…those are the news judgements we gotta make on any given day.

Ed. Dir., Online news:*Our coverage was the 'breaking news' type…whats going on with the protesters, what's the damage, who's been hurt, what are people saying, how the summit itself has been affected.*

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:
To give you an idea of how things change… it was a striking change for me …in terms of going from being what my original job was supposed to be ..to a sort of crisis management …we were interviewing on Tuesday morning, Hose Bovee…a French farmer activist…we walked outside having done the interview and there were groups of protesters in the streets and there were riot cops…the world had changed…in the one hour that we had been inside…at that point we went down the street, took a few pictures and before we knew it the tear gas was flying…the interview with Bovee never made the air.

Political correspondent, Seattle daily:

I am sure if WTO was not coming to Seattle, I would not have got interested in the story.

Assignment Ed.,Cable news:

(We covered the story) clearly because it (the number of people) shows the support that an organization has…but things don't occur in a vacuum…every story is weighed against every other story… to decide its importance.

Political correspondent, Seattle daily:

All our energy was taken covering the protest…there was little discussion of what they were protesting about. . . we missed a story…… there was a huge labor march of 50,000 people…barely got a mention in our paper because we were so busy focusing on what was happening downtown with people breaking windows, throwing things. . .

Ed. Dir., Online news:

There was a sense of gee-whizness about protestors using the Internet …it wont be as much of a story at this point as it was then…

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:

This was a real big step for the city of Seattle… the first time the city had hosted a meeting of this magnitude…Clinton was coming…we expected Fidel Castro…lots of presidents…and protests.

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:

The minute your downtown becomes a war zone, that stuff (environmental stories) gets forced off the frontburner.

Correspondent, national daily:

This turned into a riot in the streets of an American city and we had to cover it as a riot…no matter what the underlying issues were.

Sources and sourcing patterns changed for the duration of the protests for most reporters. Even business correspondents who had traditionally contacted ''high-ranking WTO officials, U.S. trade representative's office, corporate lobbyists and CEOs who are very active on trade, law firms that have big trade practices in Washington,…'' made quick contacts during the protest coverage with anti-globalization activists (a number of these contacts were made by going online to anti-globalization websites), trade unionists and academics. What is significant, however, is that journalists now have the latter variety on their ''source files'' but do not activate these sources unless another protest is planned or the issue flares up in some way. They do, however, continue to communicate with the former category of sources. Further, the new sources used fell largely in the category described in the literature, in the sense that preference was given to official spokespersons from amongst the movement activists, prominent (celebrity) activists and to the articulate. Even those journalists who spoke to common protestors on the streets did so only for on-the-spot coverage and no longer maintain contact with them.

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:

I talked to the farm bureau about genetic engineering, I talked to local farmers about their perspectives, I talked to timber companies *about their concerns over globalization …all those groups were there and I had a big packet full of phone numbers…all that stuff was very structured and organized until all hell broke loose…*

Correspondent, Washington daily:

Because it was already erupting when I got there…I called the local authorities,…the mayor's office, the police chiefs office…for one…and then I think there were an assortment of protest leaders.

Business correspondent, Seattle daily:

I couldn't get into the convention…so I walked around and interviewed whoever I could run into…mostly delegates…this forlorn group of Pakistanis…I talked to delegates. I also did (earlier) a profile of one anti-WTO organizer…she was in a debate I covered and she was the most articulate… so I called her up.

Consonant with the literature on journalists' coverage decisions being based on their perceptions of story importance and suitability, journalists who covered the protests organized their coverage in conventional ways. What is interesting is that most of the times, the web interface was also re-framed by them to fit into their traditional perceptions.

Assignment Ed., Cable news:

You know… there was a story that …(chuckles)…actually resulted from reading one of the message boards…someone wrote a question to the organizers…I think the exact question was, ' 'What's the deal with those big-assed puppets?' ' So…it was kind of… seemed interesting to us because we had the same question so we went and interviewed a *fascinating guy who made big-assed puppets…so that's a story that was a direct result of the bulletin board of the a16.org website.*

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:

What they (at the station) wanted was that if somebody was dressed up as a giant ear of corn then they wanted me to do the story on why genetically engineered corn was a concern…so they wanted me to be a sort of issue-context person although that very quickly fell by the wayside as things got out of hand but that was the plan.

There were a few cases, however, where journalists made an attempt at a well-rounded coverage…a business reporter at a Boston daily stated that he was interested in the issue of sweatshops and during the globalization debate, was able to tie in this interest. He said that while the sweatshop issue had been interesting to readers for a while ''because of celebrities having been embarrassed in the issue' ' the ''bane of daily news-reporting' ' was that it did not allow him to sustain his interest in these issues. He has since moved from covering these issues to working as a Metro editor and is no longer writing on these issues. A correspondent at a Canadian daily, too, spoke of organizational factors having enhanced their coverage…' 'our boss was young and committed.' '

Journalists often related accounts of their coverage and in that context, engaged in talk about their self-perception as journalists and about their own objectivity. The latter was often in the context of the claims of the Independent Media employed by the activists.An interesting finding is that very few of the journalists really considered the objectivity norm to be relevant anymore.Most of them spoke about it with humor.

Economics writer, Washington-based daily:

We're not supposed to answer questions like that (the questions asked for this study) . . . it presupposes that we have opinions and you and others may come to the conclusion that therefore they cloud our objectivity. In order to keep up the fiction that we are totally objective…I will tell you that I have no ideas or opinions. But…at the time, I was viewed by the anti-globalizers as sympathetic to their cause but they realized later that that was only half true.

Buesiness correspondent, Washington-based daily:

I am supposed to be one of those reporters who doesn't have a viewpoint (laughs).

Correspondent, Online news:

My attitude toward the protests was just this -- objective analysis.

Correspondent, Cable TV:

If I know something is not right, I don't write about it and then go get the other side…I just don't write about it.

Correspondent, Seattle daily:

At one point during the demonstrations, I thought to myself, ' ' What's going on in this city…you can have property destruction going on and a *group of guys in MASKS… and they were not stopped…that made me angry…the protestors knew I wasn't friendly.*

Correspondent, Cable news:

I did a story on how the protestors were covering themselves…we asked them what was wrong with the way we were covering it ..(chuckles)…how are you different…we are alternative too -- it was a light-hearted piece. We would get such answers as ' 'well we don't think that the big multinational corporate media would give the same hearing…and I would say, ''big multinational corporate media…gee, that would be us!' '

The journalists also had clearly-stated notions of the attitudes of their readers/ the American public toward social movement protests/ civil disobedience and toward the coverage they wanted:

Correspondent, cable news:
My guess is that if the cause is seen as just, that most Americans are favorably inclined to protests like those against apartheid…but not towards people with giant foam-rubber hats…that's all you need to know about such protesters.

Correspondent, national daily:

If you're presenting (news) for readers in intelligent ways…they really have a way of sorting out the lunacy from what's real in their own lives…they're no more trustful of big corporations than the people in the street but they also don't trust people who dress as turtles and strawberries…and smash up shops…they want reasonable checks on *corporate behavior too but they also want the economy to function freely and they largely believe in capitalism*

By and large, there was little sustained coverage of the issue debates once the protests had passed though the recurrence of protests attracted enhanced coverage under a news ' 'post-Seattle'' pattern of newsgathering. For a variety of reasons ranging from flagging interest to organizational and beat changes, there has been no significant impact on subsequent coverage, although some of those journalists who covered these issues even before the protests continue to do so.

Correspondent, national daily:

Almost never (cover the issues). We don't have as big a staff as we may appear to have.

Ed. Dir., Online news:

The protests raised everyone's awareness of the some imp issues..but as soon as the breaking news story was over we had less time and resources to spend on an analysis of global trade issues.

Correspondent, Washington-based daily:

In the nature of my job here we are such generalists…move from subject to subject so often, I knew I wasn't going to come back to the subject

Correspondent, national daily:

> *We used to cover the politics of trade much more actively than we do now…we got a sense that readers weren't interested in that anymore. We did not send anyone to the subsequent anti-globalization rallies.*

Environmental correspondent, Seattle TV station:

I am working on a story right now on a story which is a globalization issue but it isn't framed in the context of WTO though it did get onto my radar screen during the WTO.

Despite the reduced interest and apparent indifference towards such coverage unless accorded a news peg, journalists, when asked to reflect on their coverage and comment on what they would have liked to change, almost all of the journalists invariably spoke of a desire for doing in-depth, contextualized coverage to issues raised in the globalization debate.

Correspondent, Cable TV:

I would take five complaints and then go and see how they square with facts and do a kind of fact-check-reality- check kind of piece.

Discussion and Implications:

The material gathered in this study provides a rich and diverse context for understanding the convergence of journalism practice, tools and coverage. Seen through a context in which each of these dynamics was brought to the forefront in a major news story that also had implications for sustained coverage and parallel developments of news sources, access to issues, and actually played into some of the major frames routinely employed by the media, this case-study throws open multiple areas for further analyses.

Most of how the journalism-social movement relationship played out seems to be consonant with the literature discussed in this study. Analyzing Internet use in this case, it appears that despite the euphoria over the new multi-faceted tool, journalists seem to be putting it to conventional uses that add mere speed and efficiency to their routines. There also seems to be an element of fatigue and suspicion, and this came to the forefront for many journalists when it came to quoting research from the websites or providing links in their stories to these websites, even though they themselves found these useful for providing coherent analyses and contexts. This also corresponds to the literature on journalists' traditional aversion to giving a voice to unofficial, unconventional and unreliable social actors.

The websites were found most useful for learning of logistics of protest plans, especially in protests in other cities that followed the ones in Seattle. Most journalists spoke of being struck by the ' 'scale'' and ''diversity'' of the protests (though only some had similar opinions about the issue debates) and believed that they definitely made for good stories. This ties into Gans's observation that when such visible events change journalists' opinions,the events themselves are made highly visible by journalists.

There are further questions raised by the results of this study. A longitudinal analysis would be pertinent to assess to what extent social movements sponsor media frames. Content analyses -- particularly textual analyses – could focus on the inquiry into the extent to which protests and demonstrations are successful in framing mainstream media coverage. More importantly, these would provide a further understanding of the most significant finding from the above study -- are these frames then re-framed by the media and if so, in what way?

Table A

Frequency of Internet Use :

Variable	*Frequency*	*%*
How often logged onto the Internet		
all the time	19	35.2
most of the time	18	33.3
occasionally	15	27.8
rarely	0	0.0
never	0	0.0
	------	-------
Total	52	96.3

Table B

The Effects of Internet Use :

Variable	*Frequency*	*%*
Improved quality of stories		
Yes	43	79.6
No	5	9.3
Don't know	6	11.1
	--------	--------
Total	54	100.0
Made you a better-informed professional		
Yes	51	94.4
No	1	1.9
Don't know	2	3.7
	--------	--------
Total	54	100.0
Caused an overload of information for journalists		
Yes	20	37.0
No	32	59.3
Don't know	2	3.7
	---------	---------
Total	54	100.0
Made journalists vulnerable to information that's suspect		
Yes	37	68.5
No	14	25.9
Don't know	3	5.6
	----------	----------
Total	54	100.0

Table C

Usefulness of the Internet For:

Variable	*Frequency*	*%*
Story ideas		
less important	33	61.1
somewhat important	13	24.1
most important	8	14.9
Research		
less important	6	9.2
somewhat important	7	13.0
most important	40	74.1
Contact addresses and phone numbers		
less important	12	22.3
somewhat important	10	18.5
most important	31	57.4
Increased mobility		
less important	35	64.9
somewhat important	6	11.1
most important	13	24.1
Access to other publications and news alerts		
less important	17	32.6
somewhat important	13	24.1
most important	24	34.5
Interviews via e-mail		
less important	47	87.0
somewhat important	1	1.9
most important	5	5.6

Table D

Response to Press Releases :

Variable	*Frequency*	*%*
Respond better to press releases delivered online		
Yes	15	27.8
No	28	51.9
Don't know	11	20.4
	------	---------
Total	54	100.0

Table E

Status of the Internet as a serious journalistic tool :

Variable	*Frequency*	*%*
Internet as a serious journalistic tool		
Yes	41	75.9
No	10	18.5
Don't know	3	5.6
	------	-------
Total	54	100.0

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IF A PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED, ENLARGE IT': AN IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF THE OTHER IN PEARL HARBOR AND SEPTEMBER 11 *NEW YORK TIMES* COVERAGE

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Presented at the Critical and Cultural Studies Division, Association for Education in

Journalism and Mass Communication, Annual Conference, August 2002

ABSTRACT

IF A PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED, ENLARGE IT': AN IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF THE OTHER IN PEARL HARBOR AND SEPTEMBER 11 *NEW YORK TIMES* COVERAGE

This study uses the theoretical approach of cultural materialism and compares the rhetorical strategies used to frame Japanese Americans in the first four months following Pearl Harbor with those used to describe Muslim and Arab-Americans following September 11. It suggests that strategies used to frame these groups as the Other, encourage the emergence of a specific ideological vision in the news coverage.

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'IF A PROBLEM CANNOT BE SOLVED, ENLARGE IT': AN IDEOLOGICAL CRITIQUE OF THE OTHER IN PEARL HARBOR AND SEPTEMBER 11 *NEW YORK TIMES* COVERAGE

By Bonnie Brennen and Margaret Duffy

Framing the Other

Following the September 11 terrorist attacks, journalists and citizens struggled to find a way to frame the disaster socially and historically. "It's another Pearl Harbor" was a frequent comment uttered by pundits and politicians alike. Like any analogy, the Pearl Harbor comparison encapsulates a complex situation into a single catchphrase that may offer hints as to how a current situation may be resolved. This research project compares the rhetorical strategies used to frame Japanese Americans, in the first four months following Pearl Harbor with those used to describe Muslim and Arab-Americans in the same time period following September 11. It suggests that strategies used to frame these groups as the Other, encourages the emergence of a specific ideological vision in the coverage.

This research project is framed by cultural materialism, a theoretical framework which considers cultural artifacts explicit practices of communication that are created within a historically specific society and produced under particular social, economic, and political conditions. As tangible embodiments of culture, cultural artifacts such as novels, films, and newspaper articles produce meaning and value and may provide useful documentary evidence of representations and misrepresentations of actual lived experience (Williams 1981). Cultural materialism is a text based critique, first delineated by Raymond Williams, which places cultural artifacts within a specific context in order to illustrate a text's connection to a culture's dominant ideology.

From this perspective, each text is thought to be based upon historically determined cultural conventions, forms, and perceptions that guide interpretations and may preclude individuals from reading a text "in all its freshness as a thing-in-itself" (Jameson 1981, 9). In an effort to read texts fully, cultural materialists assess the specific material conditions under which texts are produced and consider the consumption of these texts as cultural products. Rejecting the idealist emphasis on neutrality and objectivity because it "justifies and naturalizes oppression" (Wilson 1995, 16), as a theoretical framework cultural materialism is openly political and committed to the transformation of a social order.

The concept of ideology is important to most contemporary cultural positions, especially those that address aspects of language and ideas. Williams (1988) suggests that ideology in its most common usage outlines a formal system of meanings, beliefs, and values that represent a type of world view or outlook. Within a framework of cultural materialism, an emphasis on ideology may be used as an analytical tool that helps to differentiate commonsense everyday views from socially constructed cultural practices and beliefs (Cormack 1995).

Cormack (1995) outlines five essential categories of analysis within an ideological critique: context, structure, absence, style, and mode of address. Yet, he cautions that all ideological critiques must be framed within a specific historical context that attempts to demystify seemingly natural elements in order to illustrate their artificiality (27). Assertions, opinions, denials, and beliefs are judgments integral to the content category, which also assesses the choice of descriptive language, characters and their actions. The structure of cultural products is evaluated through a consideration of the order of delivery, the relationship between opening and closing elements of a text, and the use of binary oppositions. Ideological critiques also focus on the issue of absence, that is aspects of a text that an individual might expect to see included but are missing, as well as structural absences that help to frame a particular world view. In addition, the literary style of a text is interrogated as well as the mode of address used to construct the narrative.

Specifically, this research project uses an ideological critique to evaluate the rhetorical strategies used to frame the "relocation" of Japanese Americans during World War II. It looks at all *New York Times* newspaper articles, editorials, columns, and editorial cartoons from December 8, 1941 until March 18, 1942 when executive order 9102 is signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt which results in the internment of more than 110,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans. It then compares those rhetorical strategies to current *New York Times* coverage of Muslim and Arab-Americans found in newspaper articles, editorials, columns, and editorial cartoons during the first four months following September 11.

Commonsense Precautions?

Scarcely two months after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 and designated Lt. General John DeWitt as Military Commander of the Western Defense Command (Raskin 1991, Greenberg 1995). The order called for the establishment of "military areas" from which certain individuals could be banned and also included provisions to relocate those individuals. Those of Japanese descent were not specifically identified in the order though statements by many government officials—including highly racist comments by General DeWitt—made it clear that they were indeed the focus of the action. On March 18, 1942, President Roosevelt signed executive order 9102, known as the War Relocation Authority, and on March 21, 1942 the first Japanese inmates arrived at Manzanar, California (Bishop 2000).

Ultimately, 112, 000 people of Japanese descent were sent to internment camps and 70,000 of those were U. S. citizens (Raskin1991). In 1990 with very little fanfare, the U. S. government apologized for the episode and issued checks of $20,000 each to nine elderly Japanese Americans who had been interned.

It is important to note, however, that government action against Japanese aliens and citizens began as early as December 7, 1941 when Attorney General Francis Biddle was authorized to arrest enemy aliens. On December 8, 1941 the U. S. closed its borders to "all persons of Japanese ancestry, whether citizen or alien" (Daniels, 1993, 27) and by December 11, 1941, some 1,400 Japanese-Americans had already been arrested (Bishop, 2000).

Scholarly discussion of the events and policy debate that led to the internment of the Japanese ranges across several areas including the role of racism, the Japanese camp experience, and legal analysis of the executive order. Mackey & Huntzicker (1991) explore the symbolic environment of California in the 1930s and observe that powerful racist attitudes were in place long before Pearl Harbor. Mackey (1999) explicitly labels the "relocation centers" concentration camps and details the harsh conditions the inmates endured. Justice William Rehnquist's legal analysis highlights the Supreme Court decision against three Japanese dissenters who refused to be relocated. Rehnquist argues that the Court erred most egregiously in upholding a scheme in which U. S. citizens could be "rounded up and made to prove their loyalty" (Rehnquist 1998, 6).

Bishop (2000) lays much of the blame at the feet of the press for their "guard dog" rather than "watch dog" role in covering the internment activities. Soon after the bombing, reporters were interviewing Japanese citizens, drawing attention to their patriotism, and fostering a sense of at least limited tolerance. However, as soon as government officials began disseminating warnings about suspected Japanese espionage (known as the "fifth column"), coverage shifted dramatically. Themes of pragmatism in the face of serious threats emerged and the Japanese were depicted (usually quoting official government and law enforcement personnel) as dangerous, ticking time bombs. While the existence of good and loyal Japanese Americans was acknowledged, this served to offer the illusion of fairness in coverage that became increasingly vitriolic and inflammatory. The great reliance the press placed on official sources led to coverage that framed Japanese-Americans as constituting a threat to national security.

Starr (2002) reviews America's history of violating civil liberties in wartime but insists that at least to date the mass hysteria against ethnic groups that characterized previous crises has not occurred in relation to Arab-Americans. He points out, however, that the debate about how "unlawful combatants" should be handled in the legal system remains problematic as the notion of military tribunals and other suspensions of civil rights are weighed.

Certain themes recur in the scholarly and popular discussion of the events preceding the internment. Virtually all of the articles and books cited above comment on the high level of fear and paranoia following the attacks on Pear Harbor, particularly on the West Coast where large concentrations of Japanese lived and where residents felt particularly vulnerable to additional attacks. Racism is seen as coverage assigned pejorative characteristics to Japanese, describing them in negative physical ways and accusing them of congenital cunning, cowardice, and untrustworthiness. In addition, as Bishop (2000) points out, news coverage frequently framed the internment as a commonsense precaution in light of the "Japanese menace" and a natural step to take along with blackouts, protection of infrastructure, and so on.

Civil Liberties Curtailed

One approach to understanding the coverage of events after Pearl Harbor is to focus upon how it is narrativized. Early on, coverage falls into a series of stock scenarios with similar characters, stylistic choices, and scenic emphases. The content of news coverage in the *New York Times* immediately following the bombings begins to differentiate between American citizens and Japanese American citizens and quickly defines Japanese Americans as the Other. The concept of Other is often defined through a lens of imperialism, sexism, and racism, in which "the spirit of the 'primitive'" (hooks 2001, 427) lives in the bodies of individuals who appear different than those of the reigning culture. The choice of vocabulary seems particularly telling; December 8, 1941 coverage includes the terms "Japanese nationals," "Japanese citizens," "Japanese aliens," "alien enemies," "suspicious enemies," "Japanese residents," and "prisoners." Repeatedly, Japanese are described in words that are used for dangerous animals or pests. Japanese nationals and citizens are "rounded up" by "fully armed men." The "pedigrees" of prisoners are to be investigated. ("Entire City Put on War Footing" 1941, A1, A3).

Yet, there is no attempt to define these terms or to distinguish between American citizens of Japanese heritage and Japanese citizens involved in subversive activities.

Attorney General Francis Biddle announces that the FBI is taking into custody and questioning "a selected group of Japanese aliens" (Hamilton 1941, 6). Throughout the country Japanese nationals are confined to their homes, rounded up, and booked as "prisoners of the federal authorities" ("Entire City Put on War Footing" 1941, 3). On the West Coast about 300 "key" Japanese citizens are already marked for internment. Apart from an overarching emphasis on issues of national security, specifically what constitutes "selected" or "key" Japanese citizens is not addressed in the coverage. Reeling from the surprise attack, it is clear that the United States government is searching for individuals who may be dangerous to the peace and security of an American way of life.

The narrative reality described in news stories emphasizes certain aspects and leads the reader to certain conclusions. Coverage focuses on the scenic aspects of the narrative, that being a world at war and a nation besieged by immediate and potential threats. The Japanese in the U. S. are shown as one among many factors that must be pragmatically dealt with. A typical headline illustrates this: "ENTIRE CITY PUT ON WAR FOOTING. Japanese rounded up by FBI, Sent to Ellis Island—Vital Services Guarded" ("Entire City Put on War Footing" 1941, A1, A3).

The juxtaposition of the headlines and the inclusion of all of these subjects in a single story allows the reader to effortlessly situate the Japanese "round-up" as another reasonable step to take in protecting a nation at war. The same article details plans to prevent Navy yard welder strikes, cancel military shore leaves, insure Mexican border security, and establish Monterey Bay boating restrictions.

Another set of headlines from page six of the *New York Times* appears above the fold as follows: "JAPANESE SEIZURE ORDERED BY BIDDLE. Aliens on Selected List Being Rounded-Up, but Number is Not Large, He Says. ONLY SUSPECTS SOUGHT And Mass Arrests Expected to be Confined to the Canal Zone and Hawaii" (Hamilton 1941, A6).

The article again focuses on the pragmatic steps officials are taking with no evidence to justify the round-up beyond Attorney General Biddle's quote that "Japanese all over the country 'are being rounded up in view of the situation'" (Hamilton 1941, A6). Biddle's reported comments that a "relatively small number" of Japanese are being taken into custody again minimizes the impact of the action. A subhead in same article is again instructive: "Not All Classified as Enemies." Rather than saying "Most are not enemies" the phrasing leads the reader to assume that most ARE enemies and leads to the early stages of the classification system that will ultimately come into play as internment activities proceed. The emphasis on the pragmatic steps officials are taking and the establishment of a classification system tend to downplay the humanity of the group, the Japanese as individuals.

Yet another paragraph head in the same article is instructive: "Children Present a Problem." One might assume that at least this portion of the story would discuss the welfare of children whose parents are arrested or interned. Instead, the loyalty of the children is immediately questioned and the "problem" becomes the law that anyone born in this country is a bona fide citizen. The article states; "These children, of course, are as much American citizens as anybody else, so they would not be liable to internment or deportation. Presumably it would be necessary to prove disloyal activities before any action could be taken against them"(Hamilton 1941, 6). There is a quite unselfconscious assumption that officials must and should seek loopholes in laws that protect citizens of Japanese descent.

The Japanese are presented to newspaper readers almost exclusively as a security problem by juxtaposing their arrests with activities such as guarding infrastructure, by phraseology that presupposes their status as enemies, by using descriptive words that are in of themselves dehumanizing, and by downplaying the magnitude of the official action. People who have already been denied the normal naturalization process because of race are moved with relative ease out of the purview of normal human beings.

None other than the beloved First Lady, Eleanor Roosevelt provides a calming and reasoned presence, reassuring readers that although the authorities are rounding up Japanese, that those Japanese with "good records meaning no criminal nor Anti-American record have nothing to fear" (Hamilton 1941, 6). Roosevelt insists that American born children of Japanese residents in the U.S. should not be worried because they are not "liable to internment or deportation" (Hamilton 1941, 6). The First Lady's comments refer to U.S. policy in 1941, which denies first generation Japanese and Chinese residents naturalization, yet extends citizenship to children born in the United States to Japanese or Chinese residents.

Return to Normalcy

The First Lady also introduces an important theme that recurs in much of the *New York Times* coverage, that being the critical importance of a return to normalcy. As early as the day after the bombing, Roosevelt is quoted saying, "We must go about our daily business more determined than ever before to do the ordinary things s well as we can and when we find a way to do anything more in our community to help others . . . we must do it." She goes on to say, "We are the free and unconquerable people of the USA" (First Lady Calls 1941, A3.) The devotion to normalcy has a concomitant element of fear and focus on security that serves as a legitimating warrant for many subsequent actions vis-à-vis the Japanese-Americans. As will be shown, this is also a powerful theme seen in the post September 11 coverage.

In the weeks following Pearl Harbor, as the war escalates and the government becomes increasingly nervous about national security issues, Eleanor Roosevelt's words of reassurance begin to ring hollow. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Orders 9066 and 9102 and thousands of American citizens of Japanese descent are sent to internment camps. American born Japanese are now seen as potentially dangerous aliens;

in some estimates they are considered "more dangerous than the aliens, because there are more of them" (Davies 1942a, E8). In *New York Times* coverage, American citizens of Japanese heritage, referred to as Nisei, are considered suspect. While some Nisei are not only American born but also educated in the U.S., others now identified as Kibel, have been educated in Japan or have spent time there. The Kibel are considered particularly dangerous because they have been "indoctrinated with imperial aims of Tokyo" (Davies 1942a, E8). While no evidence is included to support this assessment, and no numbers are included to illustrate how many Japanese Americans have been educated in Japan, the coverage warns readers not to sympathize "with the plight of some of these American citizens" (Davies 1942a, E8). *New York Times* news articles reiterate the seeming truism, "You can't trust a Jap," and suggest that after Pear Harbor, civil liberties issues no longer apply to Japanese Americans.

By February, no one is referring to the round-ups as small and limited in nature. Overt racist comments and stereotyping are, however, becoming much more common and the protection of civil liberties for the Japanese presented as absurd. A California Congressman remarks: "This is no time to apply civil liberties on unquestionable citizenship such as the Japanese present . . . No one with any knowledge of Japanese psychology can apply the complete significance of civil liberties in this case because it constitutes a national hazard" (Votes Fund to FBI 1942, 11). Tighter restrictions close around the Japanese including identity cards, curfews, and other prohibitions by February

5, 1942. While officials continue to deny that inland internment camps are imminent, headlines reveal an increasingly aggressive tone: "NEW ORDERS CURB ALIENS IN 3 STATES. Biddle Restricts Coastal Area In California and Zones in Oregon, Washington. POWER REGIONS COVERED in California Will Keep Enemies Home at Night, Allow Travel Only to Jobs" (New Orders 1942, A7).

At this juncture, all of the Japanese have been reclassified in the press as enemies, regardless of their citizenship or any proof of disloyalty. Also, by February 5, 1942, the FBI has arrested 1,361 Germans, 2,007 Japanese, and 261 Italians. On February 21, 1942 Roosevelt's executive order permitting the establishment of military zones is reported and the headline reads: "ARMY GETS POWER TO MOVE CITIZENS OR ALIENS INLAND. President's Order is Designed Primarily to Allow Round-Up Of West Coast Japanese. OFFICERS CAN NAME AREAS. Habeas Corpus is Still a Right, But, Says Biddle, Courts can See Military Urgency" (Wood 1942, A1)

"Officials intimated, however, that even in the West Coast Situation there would be no mass removals at present, and said that the order would not be applied elsewhere than on the Pacific Coast, nor at this time to citizens of German and Italian descent" (Wood 1942, A2). No explanation is provided for why German and Italian aliens are excluded from mass evacuations.

New York Times coverage depends entirely on official sources, primarily Attorney General Biddle who finesses the issue of civil liberties and denies that this is the establishment of martial law: In one notable article Biddle explains, "It is not identical with martial law . . .Martial law means the abolition of civil rights and here no civil processes, including the right to seek a writ of habeas corpus have been suspended. "But," he added instantly, " in my judgment the **courts** would say 'this is a military matter' and we will not go behind it" (Wood, 1942, A1). Later in the article Biddle explains: "The move has been taken largely for the protection of the Japanese themselves . . . And I think we are gong to have complete cooperation from the Japanese" (Wood, 1942, A6).

Several key points emerge from this article: First, government agencies and spokesmen are the exclusive sources and even the most basic journalistic convention of seeking oppositional or different points of view is ignored. This pattern is repeated throughout the coverage. Second, Biddle uses a sophisticated rhetorical strategy in asserting that basic civil rights, including habeas corpus are still in force and then adding that "this is a military matter." Decoded, the statement means that habeas corpus is still in force for citizens and aliens who are not Japanese because the war urgency does not apply to their situation. Third, Biddle adds yet another dimension to the characterization of the internment by insisting that mass evacuation is for Japanese-Americans' own protection. Fourth, the rightness of mass evacuation for the Japanese alone is unquestioned and no explanation is provided.

The lack of commentary regarding the civil liberties of U.S. citizens of Japanese descent is an obvious absence that allows the perpetuation of a particular ideological position that ultimately supports the internment 70,000 U.S. citizens. Specifically, no where in the *New York Times* coverage is there any understanding that as American citizens, these individuals of Japanese ancestry have the same rights and privileges as other citizens. Instead, the *Times* reinforces a perception of Japanese citizens as the Other and feeds into the public hysteria by supporting the "removal of Japanese-blooded people—loyal and disloyal" (Bruck 1942, A39).

After Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, stories are framed around the "military necessity" of removing Japanese Americans from their homes. The *New York Times* reports that there is concern among governors of most states west of the Mississippi River about having relocated Japanese Americans brought to their states unless they will be "under federal supervision" ("Aliens Will be Moved" 1942). In preparation for the removal of citizens from their homes, questionable groups are classified and ranked. Class one represents all individuals suspected of espionage, sabotage, fifth column, or other subversive activity. All known class one individuals have been incarcerated since Pearl Harbor. Japanese aliens are grouped as class two and all American born individuals of Japanese lineage are put in class three. Class two and three are readied for internment. German aliens are represented in class four and Italian aliens make up class five.

Interestingly, in March 1942, loyalty committees are set up on the West Coast to evaluate the patriotism of German and Italian aliens. The *New York Times* reports that it would be unfair to consider all German and Italian aliens enemies because some of these individuals have standing in their communities and are "as loyal Americans as any one else [having] embraced and followed the principles of democracy" (Davies 1942b, A11). Of course no loyalty committees are set up for Japanese Americans who are given no way to prove their patriotism.

Targets of harassment?

Dwight D. Eisenhower's commentary, "If a problem cannot be solved, enlarge it," serves as an apt metaphor for the initial *New York Times* coverage of Arab and Muslim-Americans following the World Trade Center and Pentagon terrorist attacks. The extensive reportage details the personal and public devastation of the attacks, the hunt for suspects, and chronicles the development of the war on terrorism. In addition, issues of fear and safety emerge as a primary focus of *Times* coverage, as the newspaper highlights the potential for retribution against Arab and Muslim-Americans. As early as September 12, the *New York Times* reports that Muslims and Arab-Americans are bracing for a backlash with "grim panic" (Goodstein 2001, A12).

During the first six weeks following September 11, there is continuous coverage of the growing fear among Arab and Muslim-Americans that they will become targets of

American bigotry. Concerned that the U.S. is entering a period of discrimination in schools, jobs, and housing, parents of Muslim, Sikh, and South Asian heritage keep their children out of school and one tells the *Times*, "I am a prisoner in my home" (Hartocollis & LeDuff 2001, A20). Every rock that is thrown, every racial slur or anti-Muslim sentiment is showcased in the *New York Times* to reinforce a position that Arab and Muslim Americans are "increasingly becoming the targets of harassment and violence by civilians" (Goodstein & Niebuhr 2001, A14). Students are asked to take off their Muslim hijab (head scarves) and keep a low profile, individuals wearing Islamic attire are warned to stay out of public, and Sikhs are reported being harassed because long beards and turbans "have turned us into targets" (Lewin & Niebuhr 2001, B5). Even individuals who are neither Arab nor Muslim but appear to "untutored American eyes as if they might be" (Sengupta 2001, A24) are thought to be targeted for abuse. Within days of the attack headlines such as "For Arab-Americans, Flag-Flying and Fear" appear on articles addressing their fears of reprisal and highlighting Arab Americans efforts to illustrate their patriotism (Purdy 2001, A14).

Racial profiling becomes a heated issue as police begin searching for suspects. One week after September 11, Attorney General John Ashcroft begins to push for the expansion of governmental power in order to prevent future terrorist attacks. The Justice Department asks Congress for additional surveillance measures, relating specifically to the use of wiretaps on telephones and computers, and the Bush administration announces plans to expand its detention powers to "allow legal immigrants to be detained indefinitely" (Shenon & Toner 2001, A1). Experts begin predicting changes in immigration policy, including the distribution of fewer student and visitor visas and additional governmental "monitoring of foreigners' movements" (Sachs 2001a, A16) while they are in the United States.

Initially in the *New York Times* coverage, there is considerable angst regarding the use of racial profiling, for any reason. Experts equate it with "original sin" (Haberman 2001, A10), yet warn that it may soon get wider approval by the courts. A court ruling upholding a 1992 racial profiling decision gets prominent play and quotes the ruling's evaluation that "facts are not to be ignored … simply because they may be unpleasant" (Glaberson 2001a, A16). These statements echo Gen. Biddle's comments made some fifty years earlier. A front-page headline on September 23, nicely outlines the current dilemma: "Americans Give in to Race Profiling. Once Appalled by The Practice, Many Say they Now Do It" (Verhovek 2001, A1). Arab-looking men are taken off of airline flights; Arab-American taxi drivers fear retaliation and refuse to work. The *Times* reports that people of Middle Eastern or South Asian descent are increasingly becoming "targets of harassment and violence by civilians" (Goodstein & Niebuhr 2001, A14) as well as the focus of intense police scrutiny.

Reports of the harassment of Christian Arabs are chronicled, African-American Muslims express sadness and fear regarding retribution for September11, and one explains, "It's sort of like being black twice" (Fountain 2001, B9). Interestingly, the backlash reported against African-American Muslims is comprised of "glares and harsh words" (Fountain 2001, B9); there are absolutely no physical assaults reported. One *Times* article reports that because they fear a white backlash, Arab-Americans are settling legal cases that prior to September 11 they might have contested (Glaberson 2001b, B8). One major omission of the news story is any specific estimate of how many cases may have been affected.

Hard evidence is also lacking in the *Times* coverage of an Arab-American convenience store owner's murder. Given prominent play in the "A" section of the newspaper, the article's headline, "Slain Arab-American May Have Been Hate-Crime Victim" outlines the focus of the story. While the article reports that the store owner "may have paid the ultimate price for looking a little like the suspects in the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon" (Nieves 2001, A7), it also admits that there is not any specific evidence to confirm this suspicion. The news story and three column picture clearly supports the contention that the store owner's death is the latest evidence of a Arab and Muslim-American backlash; however, it does include commentary from the police that "the murder could have been a robbery gone bad" (Nieves 2001, A7).

Racial profiling of Arab and Muslim-Americans stir fears of their internment in Japanese Americans, who voice concern that history might repeat itself. While there are immediate comparisons to Pearl Harbor in the initial post September 11 coverage, most of it focuses on the surprise aspect of the attacks as well as the perpetrators themselves. Terrorists are called the "new kamikazes of the twenty-first century" (Gordon 2001, A5) specifically because during World War II, Japanese kamikaze planes, killed almost 5,000 men, sank dozens of ships and damaged hundreds of others. Yet, Pearl Harbor comparisons quickly fade and an overriding emphasis of the coverage is on tolerance.

In addition to calls for tolerance from the President, who insists that violence is unacceptable, advertisements produced in the first few weeks following the attacks focus on issues of unity and diversity. For example, A Lord and Taylor advertisement suggests that in unity as a nation, we shall overcome this tragedy ("In Unity, We Stand" 2001, A31). An Exxon-Mobil advertisement insists that as Americans our strength must come from diversity. Calling attacks on Arabs and others of Middle-Eastern descent, misguided and ignorant, the ad insists that "such heinous acts have no place in this or any country" ("Strength From Diversity" 2001, A25). Muslim and Arab Americans are also asked to be tolerant and understanding if stopped by authorities. Explaining that at least 300 middle eastern individuals are wanted for questioning in connection with the attacks, officials suggest that "people thought to resemble specific suspects" (Sachs 2001b, A19) may be detained.

Rather than openly identifying Arab and Muslim-Americans as the Other, post September 11 coverage embraces a politically correct rhetoric of inclusiveness and diversity. Within two weeks of the attacks, the *New York Times* begins reporting incidences of tolerance and understanding, suggesting that the country's business and political leaders understand the need for acceptance of all Americans. Such an emphasis may in part relate to the power of demographics to "bulldoze new boundaries for political discourse" (Harden 2001, B8). During the last two decades, a large non-white immigration has occurred in the U.S. Currently only one in four of the 30 million foreign-born residents in the U.S. is white, resulting in many Arab-Americans becoming "increasingly part of the nation's power structure" (Harden 2001, B8). The 2000 census, identifies one million Americans as being of Arab descent and ten million people describing themselves as Asian-Americans. In contrast, in 1942, when Japanese-Americans were placed in internment camps, about "ninety-nine percent of the country's foreign born residents were white" (Harden 2001, B8). Yet, although a rhetoric of inclusiveness abounds, Arab and Muslim-Americans are still differentiated from other U.S. citizens and ultimately retain their Other status.

Oppositional Voices Muted

There are distinct differences as well as similarities between coverage and events following the September 11 terrorist attacks and the treatment of Japanese-Americans following Pearl Harbor. Yet both reveal essential aspects of American values and national character. As of this writing, drastic measures such as internments have not taken place and there is no reason to expect that they will. Certainly, demographic power has opened up political discourse. Nevertheless, several troubling trends have emerged.

First, dissenting or oppositional voices are muted. Those who make comments interpreted as critical to the U. S. or any of its statements often come under ferocious attack. For example, Bill Maher, host of ABC's "Politically Incorrect" remarked that "we have been the cowards, lobbing cruise missiles from 2,000 miles away" (Bohlen, 2001, A11). Maher and the show were denounced, sponsors withdrew, and some months later the show was canceled. Maher apologized and is still trying to recover from the situation. Similar statements from writer Susan Sontag in the *New Yorker* drew extensive criticism as well (Bohlen 2001, A11). In addition, Democrats in the Senate were sharply criticized for not moving fast enough in pushing through the Bush administration's anti-terror bill (Lewis & Toner 2001, B8)

An October 14, 2001 article leads with the information that more than 600 individuals have been arrested although the authorities have refused to call it a "round-up." "Civil liberties groups have complained about the number of people arrested, but few have directly criticized Mr. Ashcroft or the FBI Justice Department officials have said they are following the rules set down in federal immigration law." (Johnston 2001, B3). Of course, one is left to wonder if the severity of an action is diminished, merely because it is not described rhetorically as a "round-up."

In the coverage, a powerful desire for normalcy and security/safety are paramount and are used unselfconsciously for legitimating reasons for undertaking intensive invasions of privacy. For example, a full page K-Mart advertisement featuring the American Flag, encourages patriotic Americans to embrace freedom by placing the ad in their windows ("Embrace freedom 2001, A24). Perhaps the September 11 crisis is characterized more by absences in reporting. Since the attacks, law enforcement and other government officials have significantly expanded powers in investigation, surveillance, and censorship. As reported by the ACLU, the USA Patriot Act authorizes agencies investigating a criminal investigation to review any material that may be "relevant" in pursuit of the investigation including web surfing records, ISP records, wiretaps, public library usage, credit card records, and other data mining activities. In addition, a recent *Wall Street Journal* article pointed out that video-surveillance is expanding, especially in the Washington, D. C. area (Bravin 2002, B4). In a related article, Ann Davis points out that behavioral profiling based on work history, length of residency, and other factors are now being put in place.

Interestingly, an avalanche of articles and advertisements deploring episodes of anti-Arab racism or intolerance appear to be diverting attention from the sweeping and draconian security measures that have been put in place with relatively little debate. *New York Times* coverage of the USA Patriot Act and associated anti-terrorism measures is scant. In fact, a November 10, 2001 front page article on the wiretapping of prisoners notes that new regulation on eavesdropping that might "Impede terrorist activity" were instituted on October 30, 2001 "with little public notice" (Lewis & Marquis 2001, B6). Perhaps one reason that there has not been much public reaction to the new restrictions is that the *Times* and other mainstream newspapers have not focused much attention on this story. While issues of racial profiling are given extensive and prominent coverage in the *New York Times*, articles focusing on the curtailment of civil liberties are often buried in the middle of the B section of the newspaper. And yet anger and fear are the official explanations given for why the public has not responded to the expansion of executive power. According to White House officials, "the public is so angry and so alarmed by the terrorist attacks that they will grand substantial leeway to the executive branch" (Toner 2001, B6).

Officials repeatedly assert that "we will not allow this enemy to win the war by changing our way of life or restricting our freedom" ("Bush's Remarks to Cabinet" 2001 A16). Time after time, officials conflate safety concerns with fundamental issues of liberty and democracy. Ultimately, the coverage of Japanese-Americans as well as Muslim and Arab-Americans is framed to evoke a pervading sense of fear about the Other. After Pearl Harbor and again following the September 11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. government has cultivated a climate of fear in American citizens. Yet bell hooks suggests that fear may be seen as an ideological strategy used by a government to ensure the obedience of its citizens. "Fear is the primary force upholding structures of domination. It promotes the desire for separation, the desire not to be known" (hooks 2000, 93). Equating fear with alienation and separation, hooks maintains that when individuals are taught that sameness is equivalent to safety, then any type of difference is perceived as a threat to both the individual and the collective culture.

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But where are the clothes? The pornographic stereotype in mainstream American fashion advertising

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But where are the clothes? The pornographic stereotype in mainstream American fashion advertising

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Abstract

This paper is a critical analysis of the pornographication of mainstream fashion advertising in fashion magazines. A feminist centered approach is used to analyze select illustrative fashion advertisements using Kuhn's conventions of photographic pornography resulting in the pornographic stereotype. The findings are important in that persistent images can undermine women's hard earned freedoms, impact how young girls are viewed by boys and men, and how women view themselves.

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But, where are the clothes? The pornographic stereotype in mainstream American fashion advertising

> Being aroused to go out and purchase a lipstick or a car is definitely more acceptable than being sexually aroused. Seems you can't use sex to sell sex, but you can quite happily use sex to sell *stuff*. (Squires et al. 2000).

The woman looks you straight in the eye.... defiantly, suggestively. Her hands reach to her inner thighs, parting her legs as she straddles the aqua upholstered drive train hump in the backseat of the big blue car. She knows you are looking at her....watching her perform for you. Just for you. Sounds like a scene straight out of pornography doesn't it? The truth is, this image is from a recent advertisement for Bebe clothing that ran in *Vogue* magazine.

While Freud declared anatomy to be destiny, it is more complicated than that. In fact, it is each society's vision of destiny (articulated through its mythology, social attitudes, cultural traditions) that forms the basis for its understanding of the body and, by extension, sexuality. Any discussion of the social control of bodies must "consider the control of women's bodies by men under a system of patriarchy" (Turner, 1984, 3). This includes framing and control of female sexuality. Whether in fashion, art, or advertising photography, nude or semi-nude women are common and powerful cultural icons in the expression of sexual relations. The sexualization of commodities through advertising builds upon the mythology that "equates money, power, and desire" (Highwater, 171).

Asa Berger (2000) points out that "sexuality, sexual desire, sexual lust, and even intimations of sexual intercourse are fairly ubiquitous in contemporary advertising." Why is advertising so obsessed with gender and sexuality? For two reasons. First, "gender is one of our deepest and most important traits as human beings" and, second, "gender can be communicated at a glance (almost instantly)" because of our understanding of how advertising presents a view of the world (Jhally, 1990, 135). Advertising depends heavily on the use of symbols, colors, and allusion to create parallels with the viewer's world, presenting it in ways that are plausible. By constructing what is "feminine," advertising works to explain gender differences and bear the dominant ideology of male dominance. Goffman (1976, p. 7) writes:

> One of the most deeply seated traits of man, it is felt, is gender; femininity and masculinity are in a sense the prototypes of essential expression--something that strikes at the most basic characteristics of the individual.

This paper is about the pornographication of mainstream American fashion advertising.[1] By examining fashion advertisements from magazines such as *Vogue, Elle*, and *W*, I suggest that the cultivation and perpetuation of these images undermine women by presenting them as object of the male pornographic gaze. Advertising becomes what Caputi (1999) refers to as "the pornography of everyday life" wherein the "female image is seen through the lens of male sexual fantasy" (Steele, 1991, 92). Male heterosexual eroticisiation of the female body in fashion advertising is an example of an ideology that supports an aspect of male desire resulting in "male psychosexual fetishistic formation" (Stratton, 1996, 1).

A feminist centered approach is used to analyze select illustrative fashion advertisements (Goffman, 1976; Kuhns, 1985; Schroeder & Borgerson, 1998). Kuhn's 1985 Conventions of Photographic Pornography are used to expose the pornographication of fashion advertising in what I call the *pornographic stereotype*. This stereotype is a combination of sex role stereotypes, such as occupation and unrealistic standards of beauty, with overgeneralized representations of female sexual availability that further constructs women as one-dimensional objects of male power.

The findings of this study are important because to strip away the veil of anonymity and mystery that surrounds advertising is of great value in "demystifying the images that parade before our lives" (Jhally, 1995, p.86). From a feminist perspective unveiling this information is important as persistent images such as these undermine women's hard-earned freedoms. These images in advertising are loaded with hegemonic potential. By not seeming strange us, to paraphrase Goffman (1976), the proliferation of these images gains acceptance as normal reflections of heterosexuality.

Visual "truth"

Fashion is "a catalyst of popular culture and the reflection of the tenor of a period, the fashion photograph influences and is influenced by not only dress but also music, film, video, street culture, and art" (Wilkes, 1991,1). Photography, as the current medium of expression of fashion advertising is an important part of this process as it lends the quality of "visual truth" to what we see (Newton, 2000). According to Kuhn (1985), "photography draws on an ideology of the visible as evidence. Whereas the eye of the camera is neutral, it sees the world as it is: we look at a photograph and see a slice of the world." Seeing becomes a circuit of visibility and truth—someone is looking and someone is being looked at.

Fashion photography and, by extension fashion advertising, have historically transgressed moral boundaries of what is commonly regarded as "appropriate." What passes for fashion advertising today would have been considered inappropriate for a general audience a few years ago. Why is this? According to *Advertising Age* editor Scott Danton, "it's not about advertising. It's about being noticed" (Ingrassia, 2000). "Sexuality provides a resource that can be used to get attention and communicate instantly" (Jhally, 1990) and enables advertisers to rise above the clutter. "Sex never

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[1] **Fashion is defined as apparel (including clothing, shoes, and accessories) as well as fragrances.**

fails as an attention-getter and in a particularly competitive and expansive era for American marketing, advertisers like to be on a sure thing--nothing cuts through the clutter like sex" (Solomon, 1990, 69). Very often sex, particularly female sex, to sell regardless if the product is related to the body or not, "women…are used to sell everything from automobiles to toothpaste" (Asa Berger, 2000, 57). It is often difficult in fact to find the product in the ads, "sublimating product illustration to the creation of an independently arresting image" (Harrison, 1991, 248).

Fashion advertising presents a good opportunity to explore the relationship between portrayals of women's bodies since clothing has a natural relationship to bodies. Clothing, by virtue of its presence or absence, is a form of social communication, that not only reflects culture, but also, marks "meaningful differences between categories" (Sahlins, 1976, 185). "Sex sells," says fashion historian Valerie Steele (1991, 81) and "sex ought to be even more effective at selling fashion, which is about bodies as much as it is about clothes." However, in recent years, many readers are asking of ads, "where are the clothes?" (Jalouse, 162).

Background

After the economic and social liberation of the 1960s, advertisers were hot to move the line a bit further, waiting in the wings for permission to go ahead. In the 1970s advertising "agencies commanded budgets large enough to hire flawlessly beautiful models, photographers possessed the technical finesse to place them in flattering light; and magazines finally disposed over the requisite how-to to lend them a high gloss color" (Köhler, 1995, 129). The only hesitation was how far they could take sex appeal before "consumer stimulation gave way to aversion" since "the sex appeal of naked skin is one of the most irresistible stimuli to buying" (Köhler, 1995, 129).

While fashion photography has always dallied on the line between erotica and soft porn, fashion advertising was on a slightly more restrained path. That is, until the 1970s when "the pill" and a reinvigorated women's rights movement resulted in more openness toward female sexuality while, simultaneously threatening patriarchal society. By relegating women to pejorative presentations that rely nudity and semi-nudity, fashion advertising draws upon a long tradition in art and photography that reinforces societal beliefs about male superiority.

Representing a powerful element in the reinforcement of social mores, the media in general and advertising in particular work to construct gender difference in a way that appears to be a reflection of reality. Essentially, these messages are about power--reinforcing the existing power structure that relegates women and children to the position of other. No longer simply about presenting the body "in its most desirable and healthy form in order to sell a product, fashion photography is now an essential artistic medium which is highly semiotically charged and is increasingly self- reflexive and shocking" (Power, 2002). Fashion photographer Vince Alleti (1999) points out that today fashion advertising is at a critical point, "this is truly a fashion moment. Perhaps because it has little to do with traditional ideas of beauty and even less to do with documenting a garment, fashion photography has never looked as smart, eccentric, inventive or as perverse."

While "the worlds of fashion and photography have been heavy petting for decades," the recent full-blown "explosion of pornography into the realm of mainstream fashion has given way to a new, transgressive glamour" (Browne, 2001, 162). The fashion industry is replete with information about how we, in particular women, should look, should interact with others, and what we should buy to accomplish these goals. "Fashion magazines such as *Vogue* present images of women's bodies which tell us, as Goffman phrases it, "what our nature ought to be and how and when this nature ought to be exhibited" (Bentz et al, 1993). Examples include the photographic work of Irving Penn, Helmut Newton, and Guy Bourdin. When speaking about Newton's photographs, *New York Times* writer Hilton Cramer wrote, "the interest in fashion is indistinguishable from an interest in murder, pornography, and terror" (Kramer, 1975, 28).

More than just dirty pictures

> The basic Female Body comes with the following accessories: garter belt, panti girdle, crinoline, bustle, brassier, stomacher, chemise, virgin zone, spike heels, nose ring, veil, kid gloves, fish-net stockings, fichu, bandeau, Merry Widow, weepers, chokers, barrettes, bangles, beads, lorgnette, feather boa, basic black, compact Lycra stretch one-piece with modesty panel, designer peignoir, flannel nighties, lace teddy, bed, head. Margaret Atwood (1991).

To begin we need a working definition of pornography. With due respect to Chief Justice Potter, we cannot simply know that something is pornographic when we see it. While granting the importance of subjectivity, it is important to be clear about our terms and not rely on individual notions of what constitutes "dirty pictures." It is impossible to list the many definitions of pornography. For decades, scholars and the public have wrestled with this very question. There are dictionary definitions, personal definitions, and feminist definitions. The term *pornography* originates in the Greek words *graphein* and *pornographos"* which translates to writing about prostitutes (*American Heritage Dictionary*, 2000).

Often, pornography is defined by efforts to regulate it. Since we are discussing mass-market heterosexual pornography, we can look at the widely understood definition in American culture as "the material sold in pornography shops for mostly male consumers" (Dines, Jensen, & Russo, 1998, 65). Critical feminist analyses define pornography as "a specific kind of sexual material that reflects and helps maintain the sexual subordination of women" " (Dines, Jensen, & Russo, 1998, 65). McElroy (1995, 51) defines pornography as the "depiction of women and men as sexual beings." I suggest using a combination of these ideas. I contend that materials intended to arouse are not limited only to pornography shops or behind-the-counter materials and that present day mainstream fashion advertising meets the definitions of what constitutes soft-core pornography and occasionally crosses over to include elements that are used to define hard core pornography. Thereby, for purposes of this chapter, pornography is defined as:

> Material that depicts men and women as sexual beings with the purpose of sexually arousing mostly male desire in a way that reflects and helps to maintain the subordination of women.

It is important to further distinguish and describe the differences between soft-core and hard-core pornography. What is often used to distinguish these genres is the nature of power relationships. Pornographic representations run the gamut from mild versions of erotica on one end to the portrayal of actual deaths of women in snuff porn. In erotica, power relationships between individuals are equal and there is little exposure of bodies. Soft-core pornography typically presents women on their own with genitals covered. The lighting is soft and natural and attractive young women are romantically posed (Steele, 1991, 92). Sometimes grown women are made to appear like little girls.

In hard core pornography, however, women are not alone, and are often accompanied by one or several men, and possibly other women. The images are deliberately *strange*. Hard core girls look like prostitutes or lesbians; they may even be dressed as boys" (Steele, 1991, 92). The lighting is often hard flash that draws attention to the fact that there is a photographer present. Since much of pornography is about control and power, the harder the porn the clearer the disempowerment of the woman or women.

With these definitions in mind it must be noted that not all images of women, clothed or not, are pornographic. There are pornographic fashion advertisements with women who are completely clothed and others with nude or semi-nude women that can be quite elegant. That's part of the challenge of figuring out what exactly is pornographic. Also that the words sex, sexual, sexuality, and gender are used loosely in popular parlance and yet have very specific meanings. For purposes of this chapter, sex (noun) means the biological differences/divisions between men and women; sexual (adjective) and sexuality are defined as "involving the sexes," (*Webster's*, 1990, 538), and gender (noun) as the "culturally established correlates of sex," and the social construction of what is considered to be masculine and feminine differences (Goffman, 1976, 1). This is where the present analysis comes in. Pornography relies upon certain codes and conventions to communicate with the viewer. Broadly speaking, these "gender displays" (conventionalized portrayals) fall within four categories of Conventions of Pornography (Jensen and Dines, 1998, 66; Dworkin, 1988; Goffman, 1976).

1. Hierarchy: A question of power with "a group on top (men) and a group on the bottom (women)." Goffman (1976) refers to this positioning in advertisements as "rituals of subordination," "relative size," and "licensend withdrawal." These images include the use of the parent-child relationship, or treatment of a woman as child-like. Sometimes the woman is partially concealed by turning away from the camera or psychologically disengaged from the situation. Sometimes she is shy, fearful, or laughing.

2. Objectification: When a "human being, through social means, is made less human, turned into a thing or commodity, bought, and sold." In Goffman's work (1976, 29) objectification is realized through "feminine touch"which is where women use their fingers and hands to touch themselves, their lips, or to trace an outline or caress and object.
3. Submission: Acts of oppressed groups learn to anticipate the orders and desires of those who have power over them, and their compliance is then used by the dominant group to justify its dominance. This, according to Goffman (1976, 40) is a "classic stereotype of deference" of "lowering oneself physically." Beds and floors provide such places. Particular kinds of smiles engender subservience and submission as do "body clowning," "puckish styles," or "childlike guises" (Goffman, 1976, 50-51).
4. Violence: When it becomes systematic, endemic enough to be unremarkable and normative, usually taken as an implicit right of the one committing the violence." The first three conditions make violence possible.

Visual forms dominate pornography, drawing upon many conventions of visual representation. Kuhn (1995, 272) points out that while women may be subject matter of photography, "it also constructs 'woman' as a set of meanings." This brings up important questions about how we thinking about the body, how we observe it socially, technologically, and libidinally. Construction of particular scenes or events in ads trigger particular memories of sexual experiences (real or imagined) and nudity invites to look—and be rewarded with pleasure for doing so. This pleasure of looking is called **scopophilia** of which voyeurism is a part.

Voyeurism is typically manifested in the "come on." The key tool for communicating this is facial expression (Kuhn, 1995, 276). While the woman in the advertisement might appear to be doing something sexually interesting, to the viewer it appears that the photograph was taken at the exact moment the model realized she was being look at—and she likes it. Her head is tilted back or to the side so that her glance is at an angle. This look can appear to be a "come hither" or as a tease. Her lips are usually parted and the rest of her body can be read as an invitation to touch and posses her. This is a key moment in the construction of the subject-object relationship in photography. This moment fuels desire on the part of the viewer who runs no risk of rejection or disappointment because the woman is not real. However, there is the coexistent appeal of being unable to possess her with the concurrent disappointment of that as well. The model acknowledges and welcomes the spectatorship. Her body is an object to be looked upon. What the viewer does with that information varies---he or she might simply flip the page or might find the image a useful fantasy and/or masturbation tool. The viewer is both Peeping Tom and subject of the look.

Pornography in Advertising

> We don't mind nudity if there is a very good reason for it, such as sex, bathing, or autopsy. The problem is, advertising seldom presents a very good reason for it. (Garfield, 1999).

Defined as communication that is "paid for, delivered to an audience via mass media, and attempts to persuade" and is one of the most powerful relaters of cultural values that we have in modern world (O'Guinn, Allen, & Semenik, 2000, 9). O'Guinn, et. al (2000, 331-350) list several objectives for advertising that include promoting brand recall, scaring the consumer into action, define the brand image, and instill brand preference. While it's possible to use combinations of these objectives and related methods, it is under the category of Instill Brand Preference that we most commonly see sex appeal used as a tool to realize this objective. According to O'Guinn, et al. sexual appeals are "attention getting and occasionally arousing, which may affect how consumers feel about a product" (2000, 337). "Calvin Klein and many other advertisers," such as Guess, "use sexual imagery in this way to successfully mold brand image"(O'Guinn et al., 2000, 337).

Advertising provides revealing insights into the culture in which it resides, serving as a "transparent cultural artifact" and taking the "stuff of everyday life and transforming it"(Jhally, 1990, 31). Where once advertising informed consumers, modern advertising is an "*active* strategy of selling and marketing" (Falk, 1997). Rather than simply telling consumers about the *use-value* of a product the emphasis today, though branding, is the product's *exchange value*. Advertising today is less concerned with communicating essential information became and more concerned with recreating the social world and makes assumptions about what it means to be a woman and presents ways of striving to reach that ideal. Goldman (1992, 19) points out that "modern advertising thus teaches us to consume, not the product, but its sign. What the product stands for is more important that what it is, " for what it represents. It is the voice that is added to the product. Related to this process is the concept of fetishism, meaning to invest something "with powers it does not have in itself" and "seeing the meaning…as an inherent part of their physical existence when in fact that meaning is created by their integration into a *system of meaning*" (Jhally, 1988, 28-29). Humans produce this value that is added to an essentially empty container that is the product. "There is the very American, very modern faith in the possibility of continuous self-transformation. A life, after all, is commonly referred to as a *lifestyle*. Styles change" (Leibowitz & Sontag, 1999, 36).

What is it about sex and sexuality that seems to work in advertising? Since the turn of the century, advertising has been about cultivating a sense of lack and offering a (albeit temporary) solution. Advertising refers to the possibility of completion through possession of the product. A naked body works in this context to stimulate desire and the need for satisfaction. Advertising refers to eroticism by presenting a consumer good" and the "projection of abstracted lack" (da Silva Martins, 1995, 54). In Lacan's (2000) view, lack for women is articulated in needs to make us more beautiful, more attractive, and more desirable because we lack "the lean and boyish, or in some cases, anorexic bodies that so many models" have (Asa Berger, 2000, 58). Cultural ideology tells women "that they will not be desirable to, or loved by, men unless they are physically perfect" (Cortese, 1999). For men, the formation effects male expectations of the female body, "who see these women and become dissatisfied with their sexual partners" (Asa Berger, 2000, 58).

Beyond its basic selling function, advertising has always been about creating desire. That desire might be as basic as satiating hunger with a hamburger or elevating low esteem with makeup. In advertising, the nude woman becomes an iconic device for perfume, jewelry, clothing and hosiery. Sexuality thereby "became a catalyst for collapsing the distinction between high art and popular culture," (McDonald, 2001, 81). We commonly see these images in posters, pinups, and "cheesecake" photographs wherein the woman in the picture, and by extension all women, are interesting because of their body parts. Berger (1972) points out that soft core porn draws on and transforms conventions through which the nude female body is represented in art, thus placing it in a mass-market context. These conventions include angling the woman's body toward the camera to offer the maximum display offering a view of her body and the part that is emphasized and accentuated breasts through particular placement of arms, elbows, and hands. The photograph says "look at this, this body is there for you to look at, and you will enjoy looking at it. The formal arrangement of the body...solicits the spectator's gaze." (Kuhn, 1995, 275). Thereby, "voyeurism and exhibitionism are as intrinsic to fashion photography as they are to fashion itself" (Steele, 1991, 81).

In terms of constructing images of femininity, advertising establishes definitions and rules through the use of particular codes that help viewers understand what being a woman means and does so in such a way that it makes complete sense. The ubiquity of these images in the media suggests that these portrayals come to feel natural. Hall (1977) refers to this process as *articulation*. Articulation is part of the process of making meaning out of the images we see. Advertising takes meaning from a historical context" (Budgeon, 1994, 62) and then uses them "to create new meanings" or *re-presentations* (Saco, 1992, 25; Williamson, 1978, 177). The appropriation of and reformulation of cultural values "take into account not only the inherent qualities and attributes of the product they are trying to sell, but also the way in which they can make those properties mean something to us" (Williamson, 1978, 12). Advertising has to take advantage of this process because of time and space limitations. The inclusion of certain objects and materials from our lives are reconstituted in such a way that advertisers are "selling us ourselves," (Williamson, 1978, 13). In doing so, what we see in an advertisement seems to be constructed from direct knowledge. A print ad, for example, has to make an immediate connection with the viewer, thereby employing signs and symbols that have been commonplace communicators in American society. Beliefs about what being a woman is about remain unchallenged within this environment because they appear to reflect reality and follow a kind of logic that makes whatever is going on in the ad seem natural and normal and that we are seeing women as they really are (Saco, 1992, 25).

Advertising works to create meanings based on an *ideology*, defined as "the discourses and narratives that circulate in a culture and determine, to a large extent, what can and can't be thought, what can and can't be done" (Schiarato and Yell, 2000, 73). According to Budgeon (1994, 60), and Hall (1977), advertising functions ideologically in three ways:

1-Advertising provides and selectively constructs social knowledge and social imagery through which we come to understand and interpret our social world and experiences. This is accomplished by making connections between products and images organized into "frames" (Goldman, 1992).

2- Advertising classifies and orders different types of "social knowledge" according to preferred meanings and interpretations that require the participation of the viewer by isolating "meaningful moments" ( ).

3- Advertising works to "organize, orchestrate and bring together that which it has selectively represented and selectively classified," so that a particular meaning is presented.

To succeed, dominant ideology must "continually make and remake itself so as to contain meanings and values that lie outside of the dominant version" thereby reinforcing cultural hegemony (Budgeon, 1994, 65). According to Burgin (1982, 47).

> The total ideology of a society is imprinted in its production and consumption of material objects...All that constitutes reality for us is, then, impregnated with meanings. These meanings are the contingent products of history and, in sum, reflect our ideology...Objects present to the camera are already in use in the production of meanings, and photography as no choice but to operate upon such meanings.

So-called "feminine qualities," such as softness, beauty, perfection, health, and sexiness, are thereby tied to consumption of products designed to achieve these ends. Advertising draws upon a rather limited definition of femininity through display, or, as

Goffman (1977) showed ads are not about the way men and women actually behave, rather they are about the ways we think men and women behave. These images "strike at the core of individual identity and are key to "our understanding of ourselves as either male or female (socially defined within this society at this time)," and are central to "our understanding of who we are" (Jhally, 1990). Or, as Tickner (1989, 249) points out, "art does not just make ideology explicit, but can be used, at a particular historical juncture, to rework it." Problems of vision have been and are "questions about the body and the operation of social power" (Crary, 1990, 3). Representation of the body is "central to society's construction not only of norms of sexual behavior, but of power relationships in general (Pultz, 1995, 7).

Female identity in advertising is almost exclusively defined in terms of female sexuality. In the case of women, this largely becomes a question about the *lack* of social power. The nude body of a woman in advertising is ubiquitous as it reflects "cultural norms about appearance, control, and attractiveness" (Bordo, 1993). As Schroeder and Borgerson (1998, 168) point out "women are objectified in many ways, each suggesting and reinforcing the perspective that women are objects to be viewed voyeuristically, fantasized about, and possessed. Ambiguity arises when we think about these as images created of women for other women. But by "transmuting the 'male gaze' into a 'mirrored gaze' in which female readers become simultaneously the spectator and owner of the desired appearance" (Goldman, 1992, 11). While the eye "is an erogenous zone for both sexes," "men look, and women watch themselves being looked at." Women also look, of course, and that is why fashion photography, and by extension fashion advertising works so well, as "photography is uniquely well suited to expressing the instinct for pleasure inherent in the libido for looking" (Steele, 1991, 96). "The allure that fashion photography creates and revels in is frequently that of ambiguity" (Ritchin, 1991, 121). Yet, the photographs use male-oriented conventions and, as women we see these women as if we were a man looking at her. The ambiguous zone of pornography is one, "that threatens and undermines society at the same time that it is the fullest expression of society's unspoken desires" (Turner, 1984, 83).

Analysis

Social science research methods investigating portrayals of girls and women in the media have taught us a great deal. Experiments and content analyses have been particularly useful methodologies. Highly intellectualized feminist analyses have revealed a great deal about the existence of and problems with stereotypical portrayals of women. But, according to Jhally (1990), what often is missing is recognition of very real, very deep-seated, attraction. People are attracted to the images in these magazines and don't like being told that they shouldn't be. It is important to recognize that these attractions exist. Only then can we take the next step in revealing these desires as they are then articulated in the advertising images we see.

In this case, by combining nonverbal, symbolic, and sociological levels of analysis we can learn how techniques such as posture, touch, gesture, and gaze, communicate about power and authority. As Schroeder and Borgerson (1995, 174) point out, research in this area can move forward by "adopting alternative methods from the humanities and interpretive social sciences that emphasize the context in which advertising images are produced and consumed."

Most critics agree that the starting point of a visual analysis is *description*. In the case of this study, the medium is photography in the form of advertisements. In the tradition of Goffman (1979) I have assembled a selection of common advertisements from the contemporary fashion magazines *Vogue, W,* and *Elle* that illustrate how pornographic imagery has become commonplace in advertising. This method is supported by work in semiotics (Barthes, 1983; Williamson, 1978) and art history and criticism (Stokstad, 1995; Schroeder and Borgerson, 1998). The focus of these images is *interpretation* part of visual analysis. By combining Dines and Jensen's (1998) and Dworkin's (1998), four part Conventions of Photographic Pornography (1985) (hierarchy, objectification, submission, and violence) with Kuhn's feminist framework for identifying gendered codes in mass marketed pornography (invitation, bits and pieces, and caught unawares) we can see how mainstream fashion advertisements contribute to the construction and perpetuation of the pornographic stereotype.

The Conventions of Pornographic Photography and Gendered codes are (Kuhn, 1985):

1- Hierarchy:

Invitation: In this imagery, the woman invites the viewer to look. She's aware of being looked at. Her head is tilted and angular; she's teasing, with a sort of come-on look. Her lips are slightly parted.

In a two-page spread for Marc Jacob's shoes, a woman is on her back, sideways to the viewer. She wears a black strapped dress and black high heel shoes. Her right ankle is tattooed. She looks directly at the viewer as, in the first ad, she rolls onto her shoulders. Her dress has clearly slid to her waist, revealing her bare bottom. Her arms are bent over head suggesting that she is about to roll up onto her shoulders. There is a touch of white that hints at a g-string or some other small bit of underwear. In the second image she is further rolling onto her shoulders elevating and revealing her bare bottom while the viewer watches. Once again, the ad is for the shoes.

FIGURE 1 About Here

2- Objectification

Bits and Pieces Representing women only as parts has been a mainstay of fashion advertising for some time. In recent ads we can see a woman wrapped in two leather belts (not holding anything up because she is naked. She is looking forward, lips parted and wet, with her breast and nipple revealed in the crux of her elbow (Kieselstein-Cord). This type of image presents women as fragments, emphasizing particular body parts for the viewer's gaze. Often her head is missing and her body is angled toward the camera offering maximum display. Body parts are fetishized, such as breasts, buttocks, and lips.

FIGURE 2 About Here

3- Submission

Caught Unawares: Here we see a woman enjoying her own body, often pleasuring herself, unaware that she is being watched, transported by her pleasure. Her eyes are often closed, she faces away from the camera, her body is open, her genitals concealed.

Christian Dior's Opium perfume, “released in 1976. Described as an "addictive perfume" in its publicity slogan, it incarnates the fantasies and desires of the new bourgeoisie while suggesting the transgression of taboos, escape, and ecstasy. Because of its mysterious, magical, and sacred dimension, this perfume provides access to a superior spiritual existence, and the quest for the absolute” (International Perfume Council, 2001).

Banned in Great Britain and France because it was considered degrading to women, the Christian Dior Opium ad (Figure 3) just took things too far, said the publics (2001, "French Women"). The ad displays a voluptuous red-haired woman viewed from the side, wearing only a necklace and a pair of high-heeled strap sandals reclining on her back. She is fondling a breast and appears to be enthralled in sexual rapture. Her lips are parted. This advertisement is clearly an example of a caught unawares--she is enjoying her own body and is transported by her pleasure ("two staples of softcore porn" Kuhn, 1985). Her body is available for looking at, she faces away from the viewer whom she seems to be unaware of as she's so caught up in her own passions (or addictions?) This is an example of what Kuhn (1985, 30) refers to as "lawless seeing." The hierarchy of male (viewer subject) power over female (object) power is evident by her vulnerability and the appeal to scopophilia

FIGURE 3 About Here

Other examples include a recent Yves Saint Laurent Paris perfume ad, in which the viewer sees a woman, dressed only in a man's unbuttoned black, with her arms above her head gazing into the mirror (one way mirror?). Her back is arched revealing most of her breasts, all of her belly, and her bikini underwear. In the image she is accompanied by a shirtless young man/boy. The sleeve of a grown man appears in the corner. The viewer is invited to watch the goings ons---a menage a trois? An incestuous encounter? A prostitute? The story telling is up to the viewer, but clearly something sexual is or could be going on.

3- Violence

Hard core crossovers: This category presents violence in ways that combine many of the elements in the other categories in order to present situations where the woman is clearly not the one in control, or if she is, she is aggressively dominating the viewer or other people in the advertisement. Advertisements from a number of fashion houses featured women together (Lanvin, Gucci), a woman surrounded by three men (Gaultier), a woman with a whip (Dolce & Gabbana) (to my knowledge whips are not yet a fashion accessory), a woman in a leather jacket, tight, high black underwear standing in a bathroom, leaning against the sink, looking away with her purse and a naked man available (Bottega Veneta), a woman being overpowered by a man against a tree (Guess), and a female vampire with blood running out of her mouth while her Red Francesco Biasia Handbag (with cloves of garlic tied to the handles) stood safely nearby.

A particularly good example is a series of Versace advertisements that appeared in many mainstream fashion magazines featuring what appears to be a scene from a pornographic movie. In the advertisements, which appeared individually or as a fold out, in a serial format, three women are shown in various states of dress and undress, across beds adorned in bright aqua high-heeled shoes. The viewer only sees the faces of two of the models, while the third model is only viewed from behind, with the focus on her exposed buttocks which are emphasized by her black thong lace panties, garters, and hose. She is draped across a pillow, available for more pleasure. Her rumpled demeanor clearly indicates she has been active. The other women in the room are also on the bed or sitting in chairs available for the viewer and willing to be involved with one another. The ads present a scenario that combines hierarchy, objectification, and submission.

While the presumed gaze for these ads is male and heterosexual, it is also white. While an analysis of race is beyond the scope of this chapter, it is well worth identifying. Hierarchy and supremacy are clearly a mark of pornography and this ideology is reinforced through commercial messages as well.

An additional advertisement needs to be discussed. Among the dozens of advertisements in the magazines only two featured an African American woman. No other racial or ethnic groups were represented. There is literature that discusses the use of black women in pornography (and by extension and example into these advertisements).

This is an ad, which is part of series for Chloe' in which the woman is shown straddling a small pile of sand, wearing a 1-piece swimsuit that is v-shaped and open down the middle with a pineapple image at the base of her pelvis. She is wearing sunglasses so we cannot see her eyes, she is looking directly at the viewer, her lips are parted, and her nails are long as talons. On each side of her is a horse. The color scheme is browns and golds.

Figure 4 About Here

Implications and Discussion

Advertising isn't the only social, economic, and cultural force responsible for how women's bodies are viewed in American society. But, as Kilbourne (1998) points out, advertising images contribute to social problems "by creating a climate within which the marketing of women's bodies—the sexual sell and dismemberment, distorted body image ideals, and children as sex objects—is seen as acceptable." A real problem is the socialization of children into acceptance of the pornographic stereotype and the reinforcement of them throughout their lives. Several areas of concern became evident in this study: (1) portrayals of women as girls that thereby sexualizes children, (2) the normalization of violence, (3) the undermining of positive images and artful representations, and (4) the wide availability of these images.

In her video, "Slim Hopes," advertising critic Jean Kilbourne points out how pre-pubescent and pubescent children are eroticized in advertising through mainstream techniques for display. The models stand pigeon-toed, wear urchin hairstyles, and are under developed or androgynous in appearance. According to McDonald (2001, 122), "the widespread use of these techniques blurs distinction between art, fashion, advertising, and pornography."

The plethora of images of the erotic promise of teen girls pervades American culture, or what's being called the "pornographication of the American girl" (Junod, 2001). This pornographication extends beyond what we see in advertising. For example, pornography film director Gregory Dark who now directs Britney Spears in her videos, and this "seems not so much anomalous as inevitable" in what's being called "the lure of jail bait" (Junod, 2001, 133). A *Rolling Stone* cover featured Christina Aguilera with shorts unzipped and her "athletic tongue licking her lascivious lips" (Junod, 2001, 133).

In addition, advertising imagery that dresses up women like little girls offers up a virtual pedophiliac's wet dream. The young girl becomes available in fantasy but is safely so thought of because she is in fact a woman. However, such thinking facilitates not only the sexualization of girls but also supports the ideology of lower class status for women as children. Bruce Weber's controversial photographs for Calvin Klein commonly portray a "youthful eroticism" (Harrison, 1991, 276).

Another concern has to do with the level of violence (or promised violence) evident in the ads. In the advertising analyzed, as well as many others too numerous to include, violence emerged as a dominant these. Violence is one element that can be used to distinguish between soft and hard core pornography. This begs the question of whether or not fashion advertising has moved toward not only a pornographic stereotype but also whether the imagery qualifies as quasi-hard core. When discussing social behavior in what she termed our "rape prone society" sociologist Jane C. Hood (1989) remarked that, in order to be effective in preventing assaults on women, criminals are not the ones to be targeted but rather, "advertisements portraying women as sex objects." According to Hood (1989), it is becoming increasingly difficult to tell the difference between *Playboy, Vogue,* or the *Sports Illustrated Swim Suit Edition* based on what we see, and "this has to be more damaging to women than frank pornography, which you at least know is pornography" (*Women Artists, 1989).* In the ideal presented by advertising, 'our face becomes a mask and our body becomes a thing and turning a human being into a thing is often the first step toward justifying violence" (Kilbourne, 2000, 56).

Finally, it is important to stress that these images are easily accessible to all ages. Not confined to behind-the-counter locations, magazines such as *W, Elle,* and *Vogue* are widely available. The highly charged sexualized images presented in fashion advertising has inched along to the point where what we now see in doctor's offices, libraries and on our own coffee tables is in fact pornographic, and widely available to every age, including children. In addition, fashion is a powerful force in shaping popular culture and fine arts as well as a borrower from them.

Asa Berger (2000, 67) confirms that the use sexual imagery in advertising shows no signs of slowing, if for no other reason than sex has become the commodity used in competition between advertising agencies. The amount of pornographic imagery escalates into something he calls "sexual clutter" (66) where sexuality becomes so pervasive that the only way to get noticed from that point is with increasingly explicit imagery. The law of diminishing returns eventually comes in and where one type of imagery used to get our attention no longer gets a passing glance. The "sign wars" that advertising agencies engage in eventually may neutralize what we see as one company tries to "out sex" the other one. Solomon (1990, 69) sees sexual coercion in advertising as "a sign of a desperate need to make certain that clients are getting their money's worth."

The goal of this study is to provide evidence for what I am calling the pornographic stereotype in modern, mainstream fashion advertising. By using coding and categories that describe what constitutes pornography (both soft and hard core) in visual imagery it becomes clear that what is being presented is pornographic. Since advertisements, by their very nature, are designed to incite desire (in its many forms) in order to draw attention to a brand, the use of sexual appeal is a natural link to deep-seated, fundamentally human urges. Nevertheless, as Asa Berger (2000,67) warns us, "we must never underestimate the power of sexual images to affect us in mysterious and powerful ways. There is so much vicarious sex in our lives that the 'real thing' may be losing its appeal for a goodly number of people." Whether these "urges" are the result of nature or nurture is beyond the scope of this study. However, it appears that fashion advertising draws upon both. The impact of which conflates fashion and photography and advertising and pornography into a unified whole that normalizes viewing of women as only sexual, girls as sexually stimulating and available, and violence as the next level of activity and excitement. And all of this available at the local supermarket or, to our children, on our coffee tables, in a society where the visual is now the privileged mode of discourse. In what might be the most important sentence in his classic work *Gender Advertisements*, Goffman (1976, ix) points out something very real and important for us to take away:

> Although the pictures shown here cannot be taken as representative of gender behavior in real life...one can probably make a significant negative statement about them, namely, that as *pictures* they are not perceived as peculiar or unnatural.

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STEPHANIE SEYMOUR PHOTOGRAPHED BY JUERGEN TELLER

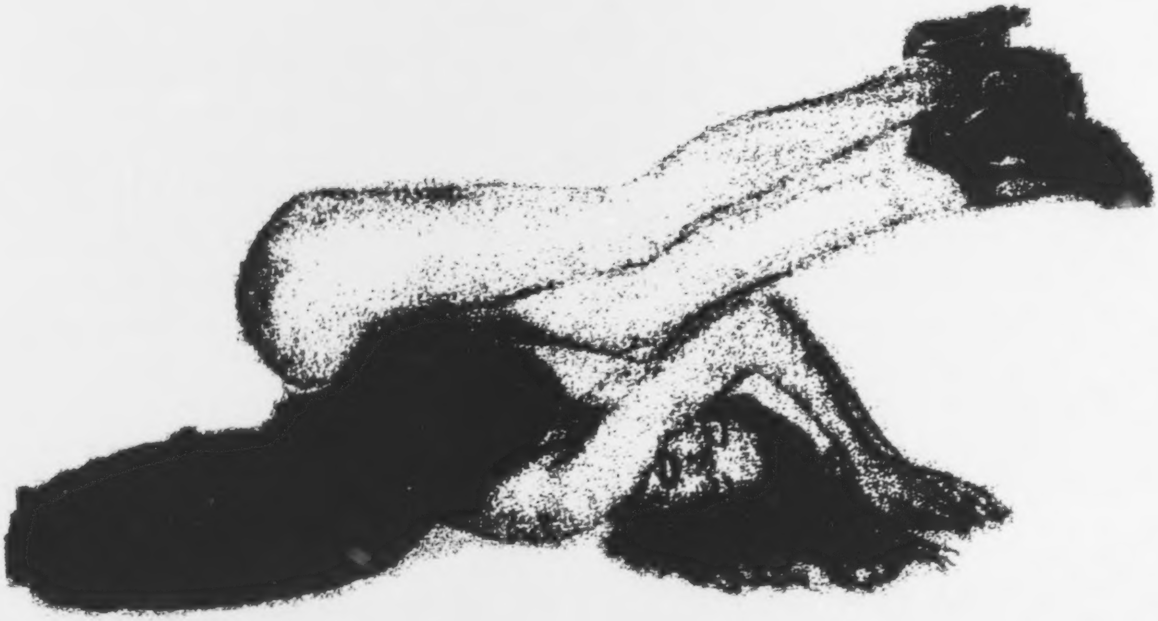

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Figure 1

385 BLEEKER STREET NEW YORK NEW YORK
212 924 6126

163 MERCER STREET NEW YORK NEW YORK
212 343 1490

125 MAIDEN LANE SAN FRANCISCO CALIFORNIA
415 362 6500

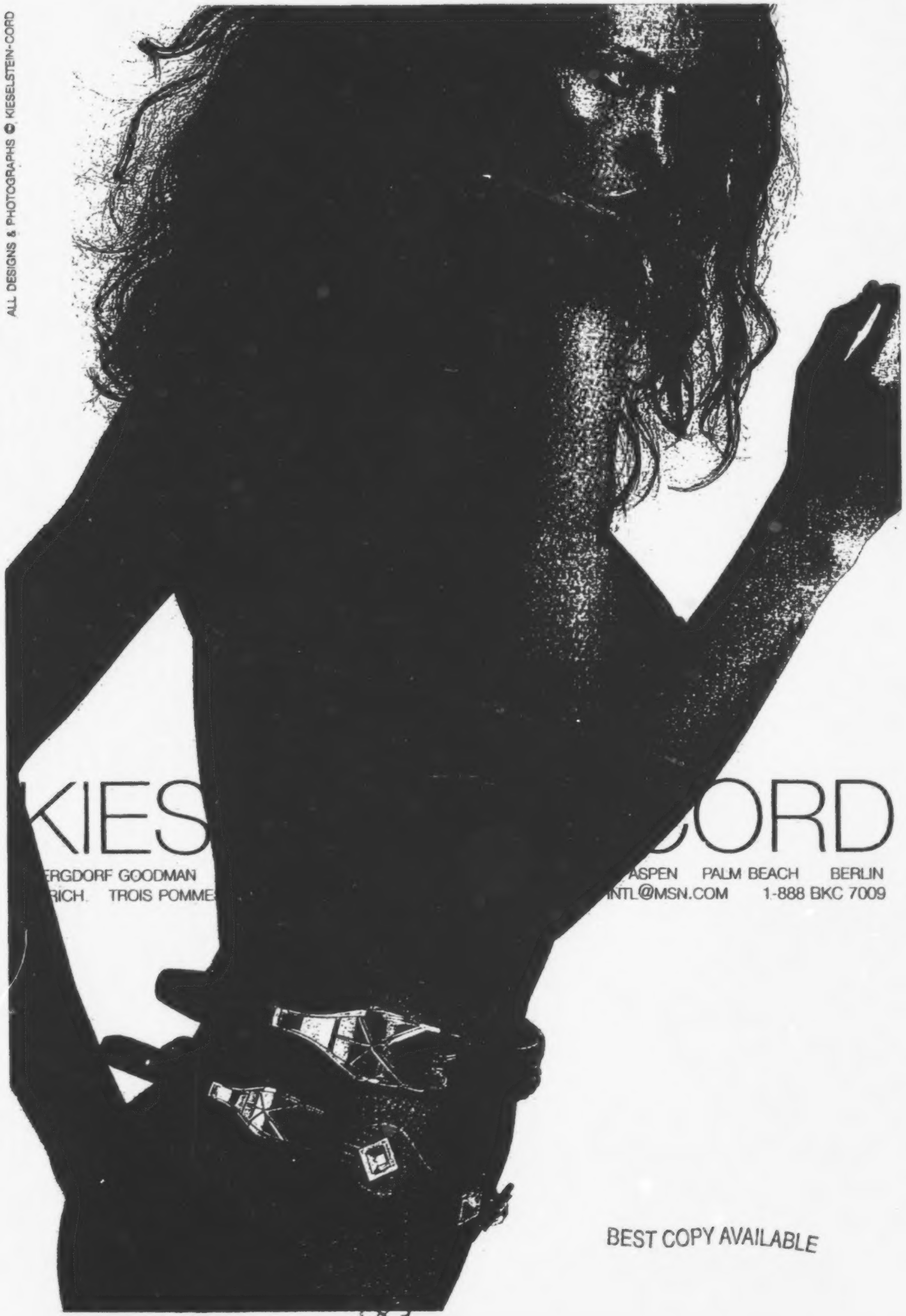

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Figure 2

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C&CS

Viva Women: Dialogue Between the Lived Experience of Past Struggle and Present Hopes

By

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Viva Women: Dialogue Between the Lived Experience of Past Struggle and Present Hopes

Bongsoo Park

A scope of Korean women's identity is less fixed in contemporary society than in traditional society. Women have been typically identified as mother, daughter, or wife in the past but as Korean women's social status has gradually improved, they have also identified as members of the work force; as individuals exercising autonomous control over their lives; or as unmarried single women pursuing careers rather than marriage. A labor force or work force mentioned is defined here as work outside the home that generates income and excludes the kind of work that traditional women performed at home—bearing and raising children and performing only domestic chores. During the last century, more Korean women attended schools and graduated, got jobs outside the home, and became working mothers and wives.

However, a societal notion of single womanhood does not seem to have changed much. Single women, regardless their ages, repeatedly received messages that they should belong to either their father or husband-- that single womanhood should be a temporary status while one seeks a mate. Although more Korean women today occupy administrational and managerial positions at workplaces, and more women postpone marriage to pursue advanced studies and careers, women are still expected to marry at some point in their lives. Some women go against societal pressure to marry and try to create their own life trajectories; but, by doing so, these women take a great risk of losing a sense of belonging to members of Korean society.

Single womanhood in Korean society is marked by great ambivalence and contradiction. Since the 1960s, due to governmental policies that have been made for economic and political reasons, Korean women have been encouraged to pursue higher education and join the work force. Women of the 1980s found more chances to pursue higher education than women of 1940s. However, as Mijeong Lee has argued, there has been little reward for their education and career aspirations.[1] Instead, Korean women have sought reward in marriage; it is assumed that marrying well-educated men, who have a good socioeconomic standing and stable, well-paying careers may eventually reward their own higher education and career aspirations.[2] Even in the year of 2001, societal norms regarding women's identity still prescribe the old path women have followed for more than 500 years. Pursuing social and class mobility may be easier via marriage than fighting well-established institutional barriers to women's career ambitions-- such as unequal pay, an unequal hiring process, and age discrimination.

Louis Perez's study of American influence on Cuban culture argues that to some extent American culture has liberated Cuban women from the private sphere.[3] For example, some Cuban women cut their hair short; wear short skirts; work outside the home; drive automobiles -- gaining physical as well as psychic mobility. And they have demanded respect from society by acquiring self-respect. Perez argues that all these changes have been spurred by commercialized forms of mass culture, such as American advertising, films, radio programs and so on.[4] Despite its Cuban market and cultural domination by the "American way of life," such popular culture has been a valuable resource for Cuban women to start seeing other ways of living their lives.

In addition to women's own internal conflicts and contradictions regarding career ambitions, external factors such as the rise and influx of mass produced cultural products and a culture of consumption, have increasingly flooded Korean women with ideas and values that are not intrinsic to the traditional Korean way of women's life. Although such changes have helped to somewhat liberate Korean women, they have added confusion and conflict to women's lives. As is the case in other underdeveloped countries, the more Korea is introduced to other cultures, the more Korean women encounter a so-called "alternative" way of life -- staying single and working outside the home. But the idealized representations of an alternative way of life have given more hope than Korean women can realize in real life.

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[1] Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 137-140.

[2] Ibid., 137-140.

[3] Perez Jr., Louis A. *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina P, 1999).

[4] Ibid.

The contradictory and ambivalent ideas of single womanhood may be found in artifacts of popular culture. Lawrence Levine defined popular culture as "culture that is *popular*; culture that is widely accessible and widely accessed; widely disseminated, and widely viewed or heard or read."[5] Contradiction and ambiguity exist within the dominant Korean societal consensus on single womanhood, but exposure of such inconsistency via popular culture offers a means for resistance to the dominant consensus.

The purpose of the study was two- fold. First, one purpose was to examine how representations of Korean single women in one specific form of popular culture relates to women's status in the past and present. A second purpose was to examine how that one form of popular culture articulates tensions between the dominant Korean societal consensus on single womanhood and the changing notion of single women's identity. What are representations of single women's identities in relation to their family, marriage, and work? More specific questions are: How is identity of single, middle-class women constructed in relation to family, marriage, and work in a specific television program? What is the value of marriage in women's life as depicted in that television program?

To answer the questions, a popular television show was studied. *Viva Women* (*Yeoja Manse*), which ran from November 2000 to January 2001 in Korea, was selected because of its genre of drama that appeals to a large audience, in general, and to young female viewers, in particular. With the popularity of youth culture, which generated a big financial gain, there have been many dramas dealing with unlikely portrayals of young generation. They tend to be larger-than-life-depictions and have little resemblance to average people's lived everyday experience. An orthodox melodrama like *Trap of Youth* or comedy romance drama like *All About Eve* has been popular in the past. Dealing with single women, *Trap of Youth* is about a single woman's road to revenge because her boyfriend betrays her to pursue a woman with money and power; *All About Eve* portrays a single woman's road to realizing a career ambition (to become a journalist) and fierce competition with her friend for the career. In both programs, the way two protagonists achieve what they want seems to be fictional and would seldom happen in real life.[6] These shows' level of viewer engagement may not be as high as for *Viva Women*, which articulates references to lived experiences of Korean single women that could be applied to other situations in women's lives. *Viva Women* also offers a way of portraying the protagonist that is considered quite revolutionary.[7] The protagonist, Dayoung, is more like the woman next door than a television star or fictional character.

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[5] Lawrence Levine, *The Predictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993), 295-96.

Viva Women ran from November 15, 2000 to January 4, 2001, twice a week for approximately 45 minutes each episode. The show generated big audiences among women, especially young females. The popularity of the show led to development of its own website, bulletin board discussion, fan club and an online store to sell the program-related paraphernalia. A Korean daily newspaper, *Chosunilbo*, reported that in the first week the show ranked fifth among four television networks' (KBS1, KBS2, MBC and SBS) shows.[8] According to TNS Media Korea, the most watched show among women in their 20's was *Viva Women* in November.[9]

The drama genre is popular in Korea.[10] Resembling a melodrama dealing with a man victimizing an innocent and loyal girlfriend, *Viva Women*'s story goes like this: Dayoung, a 29-year-old single woman living with her parent, has only one humble wish, and that is to marry Jungsuk and settle down as a housewife. Her dream is shattered by Jungsuk's betrayal and subsequent marriage to Nanhee, a daughter of the CEO of the company where Dayoung and Jungsuk work. Dayoung had reasons to believe that Jungsuk would marry her because they had dated for more than seven years and had talked about marriage.

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[6]. Dongyan Lee, "Lee Dongyan's TV Reading: SBS Drama, Viva Women," *Dongailbo* 11 December 2000. Retrieved from www.donga.com

[7]. Ibid.

[8]. Sungho Jin, "Ratings," *Chosunilbo* 11 November 2000. Retrieved from www. Chosun.com

[9]. Sungho Jin, "The 20s is Viva Women . . . the 30s is Viva Wangkwon," *Chosunilbo* 27 November 2000. Retrieved from www.chosun.com

[10]. Sang-Chul Lee and Susan K. Joe, "Key Issues in the Korean Television Industry: Programmes and Market Structure," in *Television in Contemporary Asia*, ed. David French and Michael Richards (New Delhi: Sage, 2000), 137.

After their breakup, she realizes that she hasn't accomplished much in terms of career and finance: her life is nothing without Jungsuk. Then Nanhee, feeling uncomfortable working at the same place with Dayoung, uses her power to try to fire Dayoung, and eventually, Dayoung resigns the position, as a writer of the company's newsletter. Searching for a new job and for meaning in her life without a man, she declares independence from her parents and moves out of their home. Dayoung meets a new man, Hyuk, who is a well bred, highly educated and runs his own successful business that Soyoung (Dayoung's sister) happens to work as an intern. Hyuk is a more understanding, enlightened and open-minded character than Jungsuk, who sought money and power over honesty and sincerity. Although Hyuk's mother opposed his possible marriage to Dayoung because of her age and middle-class background, Dayoung could marry Hyuk, and live a life she always had dreamed. But she rejects the opportunity to marry Hyuk. She, as a single woman, then encounters many barriers on her own in the real world: gender and age discrimination, a financial scam, and, most of all, society's prejudice against a single woman.

One media critic says that the program is popular among female audiences because of its realistic portrayal of the protagonist, Dayoung.[11] Television-shows like the U.S. program, *Friends*, are often criticized because female characters tend to be portrayed as larger-than-life roles that only emphasizes the actress' physical beauty, youth, and fashion style. Many melodramas deal with a typical story line of a man betraying a naïve, average, and loyal girlfriends to pursue a woman with money and power. Some shows depict solutions that are too extreme for average audiences to relate to – either the protagonist becomes a wicked avenger or utterly fails to the bottom as an innocent scapegoat.[12] Unlike other tragic protagonists in melodramas, Dayoung is not exceptionally beautiful, successful, smart, or lucky enough to find a "savior" replacing Jungsuk. Many projects she works on after her breakup with Jungsuk turn out to be total disasters. The very depiction of an average person, Dayoung, could easily reflect to the life of an audience member.

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[11]. "TV Reading: How Attractive These Crow Feet Around My Eyes Are. . ." *Chosunilbo* 19 December 2000. Retrieved from www.chosun.com

[12]. Ibid.

Although the media critic mentioned above acknowledges some unreal situations involving the protagonist, he says that Dayoung's life story engages audiences, and viewers identify with her.[13] *Viva Women* raises critical questions regarding Korean society's prejudice against, or poor treatment of, single women who are at the age of marriage. Dealing with women's critical issues like unemployment, single women's independence and career ambition, and the role of family and marriage in women's life, the show engages audiences in realistic topics that contemporary Korean women encounter at some point in their lives.[14] *Viva Women* deals with these serious issues comically, and it makes the discussion of them more possible.[15]

Advancement in women's education opportunities will be also discussed as background for the research here. To better understand changes in women's status over time, one needs to know that getting education or a mere act of going to school has brought women into the public arena and very often inspired them with career ambitions. Education in general is usually framed as an aspiration to career ambitions regardless gender. The section below offers discussion of the kind of social, political, cultural and historical contexts in which women have made sense of their life trajectories. That is, followed by discussion of popular culture shaping, reflecting or resonating with a particular social, cultural or political milieu of any given moment. Finally, the discussion focuses on the previously stated research question: how is identity of a single, middle-class woman constructed in *Viva Women* in relation to family, marriage, and work? What is the value of marriage in women's life as depicted in *Viva Women*?

The dialogical approach, which is discussed in detail later, was used to examine how popular culture, in general, and *Viva Women*, in particular, arbitrate tensions between the dominant patriarchal meaning of single womanhood and the emerging new way of single womanhood. The attempt was to interpret a television show as a text that engages audiences and eventually forms a social relationship. The task was to vitalize a whole text so as not to read too much about "paraphrase, propositions, or themes."[16] The goal was not to offer generalizations of a social/cultural phenomenon or an analysis of artifacts of popular culture; the goal, rather, was to provide a particular interpretation of a whole text. John Pauly defined a text as "any inscription that fixes human actions for contemplation and interpretation . . . commodities produced and consumed as units of experience."[17]

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[13]. Ibid.

[14]. Dongyan Lee, "Lee Dongyan's TV Reading: SBS Drama, Viva Women," *Dongailbo* 11 December 2000. Retrieved from www.donga.com

[15]. Ibid.

Korean Women's Life in Transition from the 19th to the 20th centuries

To understand contemporary single women's status in Korea requires looking at how women's status has been shaped and how it reflects historical changes, particularly in relation to the rapid growth of industrial modern society. The modernization process does not affect the status of all women in all nations in the same manner; the cultural, social, political, and historical background of a specific country have to be taken into account. The discussion here of past Korean women's status covers the late nineteenth century, for some traditional values existing in contemporary society, such as Confucianism can be traced to an earlier period. Without understanding of these "old values," one may find it hard to understand the current cultural and social status of Korean women.

During the *Koryo* period, 918-1392, with the influence of Buddhism and its humanistic and egalitarian ideals, there was a relaxed boundary between private and public life, and some women could freely interact with men outside the home. As Confucianism was introduced in the *Chosun* dynasty, 1392-1910, women became much less able to exercise freedom.[18] Confucianism, which is derived from Chinese classics and more literally interpreted in Korea than in China, emphasizes a hierarchical order of human beings based on age, gender, and inherited class. The hierarchical order subjected women to many oppressive rules. Some major rules strictly governing women's conduct in the *Chosun* dynasty were: 1) Women were not to have names but were to be identified by positions relative to men or by the place of their geographic origin; at marriage, the name of the original family was recorded only in the husband's household registry. 2) Women must not remarry; they were expected to look after their in-laws even after the husband's death. 3) Women were not to carry on the family line; when there was no son from a first wife, either a male relative was adopted or the husband brought in another wife to bear a son.[19] These Confucian rules confined the identity of women to that of daughter or mother; it was not even remotely possible for women in the upper class (*Yangban*) not to marry or not to conform to these rules. However, these rules were enforced in varying degrees for different classes and times. For example, peasants, women entertainers (*Kisaeng*), shaman/medicine women (*Moodang*), and slave women were relatively free to have life outside the home and to mingle with men.[20]

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[16]. John Pauly, "A Beginner's Guide to Doing Qualitative Research in Mass Communication," *Journalism Monographs* 125 (1991): 11.

[17]. Ibid., 14.

[18]. Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips. Center for Korean-American and Korean Studies (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 16-17.

In late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Korea went through drastic social and structural changes as foreign intrusions increased. The beginning of women's modern education and participation in the labor force should be understood in the historical context of internal and external conflicts during these times. Internally, scholars were divided between those who have advocated Western ideas (*Silhak*, practical learning), such as human rights, technology, science, and the like; and those who insisted on an isolationist nationalism.[21] Externally, the late *Chosun* dynasty maintained an isolationist policy until it was forced to make a treaty with Japan in 1876.[22] As a result, Korea opened ports to Japan and later to other countries. In the process of Korea's opening doors to other cultures, *Silhak* scholars gradually gained power within the government; and the government began to establish modern schools.[23]

The first women's school was established by an American missionary in 1886, and about 20 more women's schools followed within the next two decades.[24] The main goals of these schools were to bring women out of a slave-like status and to encourage gender equality. Such ideals of women's education posed a serious threat to the Korean patriarchal social order. One can imagine the fierce oppositions these schools encountered, judging from the moral codes enforced on women by Confucianism.

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[19] Ibid., 16.

[20] Ibid., 17.

[21] Sook-kyung Choi, "Formation of Women's Movement in Modern Korea: From the Enlightenment Period to 1910," in *Challenges for Women: Women's Studies in Korea*. Trans. Chang-huyn Shin, et al., ed. by Sei-Wha Chung. (Seoul: Ewha Women's UP, 1986), 104.

[22] Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 18.

[23] Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 14.

[24] Ibid., 15.

The period of Japanese rule, 1909-1945, did not stop this women's liberation movement. Women joined the underground resistance movement against Japan; attended church and sat next to men; and entered the industrial labor force. However, social and cultural notion of womanhood remained intact: Only ten percent of Korean women were literate in 1930.[25] In 1944, while 7,272 men had finished four years of college education, only 102 women in the whole nation had done so.[26]

After Korea regained independence in 1945, major changes occurred, especially in education. In 1955, more than 50 percent of boys and girls attended primary schools and in 1980 more than 90 percent of boys and girls attended secondary schools. But women fell behind men in enrollment in post-secondary education: only 26 percent of all college graduates were women in 1980.[27] The "proper" place for women was the home, and most women followed the traditional path of a "domestic" and "private person."[28]

From 1960 to 1985 Korea went through drastic transformation from an agricultural to a industrial society. Many women entered the work force under governmental policies that were to boost the economy. The proportion of women working outside the home grew from 29 percent in 1960 to 37 percent in 1980.[29] But the types of work women performed shows great disparity: Women largely occupied the agricultural and service-related fields, and men occupied mostly administrational and managerial positions.[30] Korea's rapid industrialization and modernization movement after 1960 provided working opportunities mostly for less educated women while demanding moderately educated female workers. Job opportunities for women in contemporary Korea mainly have been created in the manufacturing sector. In the 1970s and the 1980s, the kind of job women in urban areas could hold was limited to "menial service jobs, strenuous factory jobs, small-scale retailing jobs, and dead-end clerical jobs."[31] Ironically, college-educated women were least likely joined the work force in the 1980s.[32] Those who did tended to hold professional positions, such as teaching jobs in primary or secondary schools.

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[25]. Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 22.

[26]. Ibid. 22

[27]. Ibid. 22

[28]. Haejong Cho, "Korean Women in the Professions," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 52.

[29]. Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 23.

[30]. Hyoung Cho, "The Position of Women in the Korean Work Force," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 89-91.

Working women's status in the 1990s is not much different from the 1970s or the 1980s. There is still a disparity between men and women a even in teaching, which is a well-established occupation, especially for women. According to a Korean National Statistics Office's study released in 2000, 66.4 out of 100 elementary school teachers were women and 57.6 of 100 women occupied a teaching position in secondary schools.[33] But in higher education institutions, only 13.7 % of professors were women.[34] Women at the management level tell a similar story. According to a UN report in 1998, only 4.4 % of women occupied in managerial positions in Korea, while 21.8% do so in Thailand, 15.4 % in Singapore, and 8.9% in Japan.[35]

In spite of many changes in women's access to education and working opportunities, the Confucianist notion of patriarchy is practiced widely within the Korean society and family. There is little opportunity for a single woman to rise above the patriarchal order that is naturalized in Korean society. Contemporary Korean women "belong" to either their fathers or husbands. Many middle-class and upper-class women with college educations do not get to utilize their educations fully, often against their hopes: for many, a college degree may be no more than a ticket to a marriage market. If Korean women work, they tend to do so out of economic necessity, not to realize career ambitions. Furthermore, the fact that women pursue careers does not necessarily change the patriarchal order within the family or society: Working wives are still expected to be housewives at home.

Although legal systems and government policies might seem to guarantee women's right to work and education, some unspoken social norms prevail. Gender discrimination is common in workplaces.

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[31]. Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 24.

[32]. Ibid., 25

[33]. "Changing Notion of Family." *Chosunilbo* 27 December 2000. Retrieved from www. chosun.com

[34]. "Korean Women." *Chosunilbo* 31 December 1999. Retrieved from www. chosun.com

[35]. Ibid.

For example, until the mid 1980s, working women in most white-collar were expected to resign upon marriage.[36] This restriction on married women is a well-established practice in many workplaces. It was blatantly expressed in hiring policies in the 1980s that 35 percent of companies that have job postings in the newspaper hire only men who have finished mandatory military service.[37] Age discrimination was also openly practiced in Korea even in the mid-1980s: the age limit for female applicants in general is 25 while it is 30 for male.[38] As reflected in gender discriminatory practices in hiring policies, low paying positions, and the wage gap, Korean labor market provides women with little reward. The wage discrepancy between men and women from 1975 to 1985 was worse than in any other country in Asia, including Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan.[39] In 1981 women workers' wage was only 44 percent of men workers'.[40] A recent study reveals that the income of men in the age bracket 25-29 and 45-49 increases continuously while women after the age of 35 decreases continuously.[41]

Regardless actual marital status, working women are not considered primary breadwinners. Instead, working single women are thought to spend some time at work places before their marriage and permanent settlement; their wage is only a supplement to their parents' income. This is like the situation of working women of the 1920s and the 1930s in the United States. As Nan Enstad argues, employers legitimately have paid women much less than male counterparts because women are not seen as primary financial providers of families.[42] Korean women's income has not been considered as imperative as that of "breadwinners" who are viewed as responsible for feeding the whole family. The assumption seems to be that Korean women aged 35 and over are married and do not need to make as much money as men because men are the breadwinners.

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[36] Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 25.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid., 24.

[40] Eui-Young Yu, "Women in Traditional and Modern Korea," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 23.

[41] *The Lives of Korean Women Seen from Statistical Data*, (Seoul: Korean National Statistical Office, 2001). Retrieved from www.kwdr.re.kr (Korean Women's Development Institute).

[42] Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999).

As has been the case in America during the 1930s and 1940s, although being praised as patriotic, working women were supposed to work for financial reasons. While the US Great Depression became a strong incentive for women to work, the New Deal fell short of implementing gender equality and family restructuring that incorporated independent working women's status. Women's identity as workers is praised only when the traditional power relation between men and women is upheld, and women themselves are aware of it: "60 percent [of women polled by the *Ladies of Home Journal*] said they would lose respect for a husband who earned less than his wife, and 90 percent believed a wife should give up employment if their husband wanted her to do."[43]

However, Haejong Cho's study of Korean professional women shows an optimistic view of women's career options. The study argues that new economic and social opportunities allow women a life-long career as a real option: "Professional woman . . . provided a strong incentive to those who were raised in the new achievement-oriented social environment."[44] This is contrary to Mijeong Lee's study of women's education and marriage rate. With a wide wage discrepancy between men and women, institutionalized discrimination against married working women, and continuing influence of Confucianism, a life-long career for women—even before marriage-- may not be a "real option."

Due to societal restrictions, Mijeong Lee argues that education is largely considered "a social asset" that enables women to find socioeconomically successful mates rather than to locate careers.[45] The more education women have, the better the "chances to" find successful husbands. Korean women's education is rewarded not by the launch of a successful career, but by securing a socioeconomically successful mate.

Unlike what Karl Marx would argue, social change in Korea has not followed massive structural and economic changes. Structure and economic changes have offered little opportunity for women to be liberated from boundaries of class and gender. Korean women have not come to identify themselves as individuals; rather they are identified in relation to the position of men. As Simone de Beauvior argued, women are defined as "the other." Women's existence depends on how women relate to men, meaning "being relative, dependent, and non-essential."[46] This is the case because women's character is largely identified as "feminine," that is, "not inherently natural" but rather the result of many years of social conditioning, according to Herbert Marcuse.[47] Thus, economic and structural changes may not alter the social conditioning that has been practiced and maintained for at least 500 years. Because of the social conditioning, naturalized and legitimized, people seldom question why and how women became second-class citizens. For more than 500 years, a Confucian patriarchal order has conditioned a pattern of attitudes and thought about women's status in Korea.

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[43]. Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic, 1999), 47-48.

[44]. Haejong Cho, "Korean Women in the Professions," in *Korean Women in Transition: At Home and Abroad*, ed. Yu, Eui-Young and Earl H. Phillips, (Los Angeles: California State UP, 1987), 55.

[45]. Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 8.

Despite all economic and structural changes resulting from rapid industrialization and modernization since the 1960s, women remain in the home as mother, wife or daughter. Confucianism not only has shaped a culture of womanhood as inferior; the traditional family system also has limited women's identity as a mother, daughter or wife. All three identities are women's positions relative to men. Traditionally, Korean women have been viewed as child bearer, child rearer, and homemaker. Many morality codes throughout history have limited women's identity and restricted women's behaviors. For example, one of the principles of morality, *Sam-jong-ji-do*, says that women must serve only three males: father, husband and son. Some other moral codes for women from *Myongsimpo'gam* (one of the classics) said: Women must keep their chastity and be obedient; must not expect anything other than the assigned identity; they must not go outside of their houses for social activities after reaching adulthood; they must have pleasure only in cooking and making wine and clothing for men (husbands, fathers, and sons); and they must not become interested in political or social affairs other than family activities inside of the home.[48] Many of those moral codes are still considered as important guidelines for proper women's behavior in the twenty-first century.

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[46]. Ii-sook Chung, "The Conceptual Development of the Women's Liberation Movement," in *Challenges for Women: Women's Studies in Korea*. Trans. Chang-huyn Shin, et al., ed. by Sei-Wha Chung (Seoul: Ewha Women's UP, 1986), 30.

[47]. Ibid.

Dong-won Lee mentions how the notion of marriage has changed. According to his study, marriage is viewed more as an individual choice and thus the attitude that "One must marry" has changed to "It is all right not to marry."[49] Superficially, it may appear fine to be individualistic ant not conform to the traditional notion of women's status and may even look glorious, but, in reality, this is not the case. Marriage is still deemed one of the most important rites of passage in women's lives. According to Mijeong Lee's study in 1998 about the relationship between women's education and marriage, most Korea women in 1985 were married by age 35.[50] Only 0.2 percent of women aged 45 and over had never married: Nearly all the Korean women marry by a certain point in time.[51]

The Lives of Korean Women Seen from Statistical Data released in 1997 shows 28.9 percent of women responded that marriage is a "choice."[52] But that may mean more than 70 percent of Korean women consider marriage as a "must." By 1997, more women postponed marriage, and the rate of starting motherhood after the age of 35 had increased three times since 1988.[53] The same study released in 2001 concludes that the rate of marriage was at a all-time low since 1970 and especially the marriage rate for women between 24 and 28 had decreased markedly.[54] The average age at the first marriage for women had changed from 24.9 in 1991 to 26.5 in 2000.[55] Fewer Korean women had married, and more women had married later in their lives in the late 1990s than any other year. However, the study does not indicate that the number of single women had increased significantly. As Mijeong Lee concludes, women in the late 20th century in Korea married at an older age, but this does not mean that a significant number of women decide to remain as unmarried.

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[48]. Dong-won Lee, "The Changes in the Korean Family and Women," in in *Challenges for Women: Women's Studies in Korea.* Trans. Chang-huyn Shin, et al., ed. by Sei-Wha Chung (Seoul: Ewha Women's UP, 1986), 233.

[49]. Ibid., 240.

[50] Mijeong Lee, *Women's Education, Work, and Marriage in Korea: Women's Lives Under Institutional Conflicts* (Seoul: Seoul National UP, 1998), 60.

[51]. Ibid

[52]. *The Lives of Korean Women Seen from Statistical Data,* (Seoul: Korean National Statistical Office, 1997). Retrieved from www.kwdr.re.kr (Korean Women's Development Institute).

[53]. Ibid.

[54]. *The Lives of Korean Women Seen from Statistical Data,* (Seoul: Korea National Statistical Office, 2001). Retrieved from www.kwdr.re.kr (Korean Women's Development Institute).

[55]. Ibid.

Marriage does not seem to be a choice, but a requirement. Women who do not conform to the traditional identity as either a mother or a daughter jeopardize social status, respect, and a sense of belonging. Single womanhood is supposed to be a brief period for women until they find the right husbands. Marriage is said to be one of the most important rites of passage for Korean people. An old saying goes that, without marrying, a person is not an adult but remains a juvenile regardless biological age. And the number of women who are not married tells a powerful tale of how many Koreans conform to the traditional notion of womanhood. A traditional notion of family – man as a breadwinner and woman as a homemaker – has slightly changed, but the institution of marriage is still regarded as highly desirable by the majority of Koreans.

The very openness of courtship and selection of a mate in contemporary society suggest the possibility of shopping around. Often an arranged marriage becomes a prime example of "the commodification of matrimony in Korea's capitalist market economy."[56] Men and women go to the arranged meeting *(Masson)* knowing that there is a large pool of candidates they can choose from. The modern day *Masson* evolved from an old version in which a bride and groom do not actually meet until the night of their wedding day. *Masson* these days arranges a physical encounter of a man and woman and it leads not only to an economical "reciprocal sizing up" but also to an obsession with, especially, the age and looks of women. Therefore a young and beautiful woman as a future wife becomes a "commodity."[57] A love marriage born of romance is rather a new practice, probably since the 1940s with the emergent of the "new woman" who cut her hair short, went to school, wore a shorter skirt, and had a social life as an individual.[58]

The majority of studies about representations of Korean women's social status have included studies of Korean mass media's portrayals of gender roles, audience surveys on women's portrayal and effects of those portrayals. The scholarship assumes that television is a powerful agent, and the main effort is to measure just how powerful television is. These tend to be either 'counting studies'-- how many times women appear in *this* position with *that* expression-- or 'trait studies'-- what *kind* of images of women are present in the media. Numerous studies deal with statistics of Korean women's lives; these are quantification surveys, media effects, and particular images shown in certain media. These studies have quantified depictions of certain images and roles of women in media. But they have not offered interpretations of what these depictions mean. For instance, despite its usefulness, Mijeong Lee's study reduces the essence of Korean women's lives to numbers and figures such as marriage rates in different time periods and an income disparity between men and women.

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[56]. Laurel Kendall, *Getting Married in Korea: Of Gender, Morality, and Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 116.

[57]. Ibid., 117.

[58]. Ibid., 101-102.

Popular culture: Resistance or Oppression

The scholarship on television in the mid 20th century criticized its lack of aesthetics of content and its negative consequences for viewers' behavior. The Frankfurt School has criticized the negative impact of "mass culture" and demise of high culture; and the Gramiscian theory of 'hegemony' has been emphasized as important cultural factors to the success of dominant class groupings.[59] Media effects scholars have attributed young viewers' changes in behavior to television violence and sex.[60] This kind of criticism misses the point of how television intervenes in the everyday life of the society.

Indeed, television reflects "an already ongoing unraveling of social relations in society; its narcissism serves as a salve for the wounds of everyday life."[61] By exposing social contradictions, television does not merely reflect ideas and attitude of the powers that be; it also resonates with current discontent of people's everyday lived experience. Lipsitz argues that television, as a medium that bridges the gap between past and present, offers an audience comedy and drama that reflect indirectly the lived experience of past struggles and present hopes.[62] Frederic Jameson also argues that all popular culture texts contain a utopian element that contrasts the present social problems with the possibilities for happiness conjured up by imagination.[63] Popular culture offers a way of expressing indirectly alternative values and beliefs that may not be acceptable in reality. Raymond Williams argues that the nature of television is not as dichotomous as other scholars have argued; the exploration of tension between socially oppressive and resisting aspects of television has often revealed conflicting social problems and sometimes unforeseen consequences.[64] Acknowledging both an oppressive and a resisting nature of popular culture, Lipsitz argues that popular culture texts often resonate with the tensions of a given time in a way that more formal academic texts do not.[65] Television can articulate the kind of social tensions and discontents that people experience in their everyday lives and possibly provide a utopian element through offering the way of sharing similar lived experience.

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[59]. John Corner, *Critical Ideas in Television Studies* eds. Charlotte Brunsdon and John Coughie (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 8.

[60]. Ibid., 5-6.

[61]. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 19.

[62]. Ibid., 5.

The definition of popular culture and the difference between mass culture and popular culture should be noted. Lawrence Levine's criticism of critique of popular culture notes how the notion of popular culture has been misunderstood: "What we call Popular Culture has been used . . . to signify the mudsill of culture, the lowest of the low—and in this sense it has been a very misleading term which has made it virtually impossible to perceive that Shakespearean drama or opera were Popular Culture in the 19th century United States."[66] Based on this simple and instrumental definition, popular culture is defined as widely popular, accessible, and accessed. Levine also says that mass culture is not the same as popular culture because "many mass-produced books are unread, many films unseen, many radio programs unheard by substantial number of people."[67] He responds to some scholars' criticism on popular cultures being all formulaic by saying, "Formulaic culture affords many of the same rewards . . . . within the formulas, there is room for variation and surprise. The ending may be guaranteed, but the route to it can take twists and turns that not only add the spice of surprise and variation but also have things to teach audiences about the world the genre is supposedly lifting them out of."[68]

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[63]. Frederic Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York : Routledge, 1990)

[64]. Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London: Fontana, 1974)

[65]. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 56-57.

[66]. Lawrence Levine, *The Predictable Past: Explorations in American Cultural History* (New York: Oxford UP, 1993), 295.

[67]. Ibid., 296.

Popular culture may be seen as both a mode of resistance and oppression, as argued by many scholars. For example, Jackson Lears argued that popular culture, especially advertising, has been used as a tool of oppression and maintenance of the status quo; Nan Enstad has argued that consuming popular culture, such as dime novels and cheap ready-made clothes, in the early twentieth century actually helped working class women find self-identity.[69]

It is not to argue that the content of popular culture itself presents resistance. Rather the argument here is that the very existence of contradiction and ambivalence about women's identity in popular culture gives more room for women to construct their own non-traditional identities. Popular culture does not merely convey what constitutes oppression meaning to audiences, but also provides a means to resist established rules and norms. That is, through popular culture, people not only make sense of the world and conform to existing values; they also use the culture to empower themselves by inventing, creating, and interpreting their own meanings of reality and identities.[70] For example, a television show aimed at Korean single women goes beyond merely reflecting the status quo and a patriarchal meaning of single womanhood. It does not offer viable political solutions to problems, but it can reveal indirectly social contradictions and produce the discussion of them. The power of popular culture should be understood in terms of its enabling uses to relate our own lived everyday experiences to representations of social contradictions and ambivalence and create to discuss them.

According to George Lipsitz, there are three ways to examine popular culture: anthropologic, semiotic, and dialogic. The anthropological approach focuses on "the uses and effects of popular culture in the everyday lives of users"; the semiotic approach examines "the underlying structural unities that determine the ideological consequences of popular [culture's] production and reception"; and the dialogic approach departs from the assumption of "culture as conversation and contestation."[71] Anthropological and semiotic approaches tend to misattribute culture as a way of letting off steam and thus a way for societies to stabilize as total systems. The structural functionalistic approach like Parsonian sociology and Geertzian anthropology explains culture by an end result, working backward, and thus offers only teleological explanations for practically every cultural phenomenon.

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[68]. Ibid., 297.

[69]. Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia UP, 1999)

[70]. Douglas Kellner, *Media Culture: Cultural Studies, Identity and Politics Between the Modern and the Postmodern* (London: Routledge, 1995), 2-3.

These approaches regard conflicts and contradictions within a society as a serious threat to maintenance of a total system and that imply that society works toward getting rid of these conflicts and contradictions.[72] This misses the important point that popular culture, as a site for conversation, offers a civic sphere for dialogue of social tensions and conflicts. These approaches reduce and essentialize the complex historical and social milieu of a given time by explaining that popular culture is put into play as a mere social function of stabilizing society.[73] In this process, popular culture becomes merely "a way of letting off steam" and reconciling unhappy dissidents in a total social structure.[74] A society may have achieved its stability through culture at a given moment, but when one considers changes in societies over time, one can see that some features of culture have served a dominant ideology while other features have served to stir up discontented people.

While focusing on the conversation between society and agency in popular culture, dialogic criticism seeks to get away from formalism by finding meanings not in forms themselves. Rather meanings are sought in "how forms are put into play at a given moment to re-articulate or dis-articulate dominant ideology."[75] In this approach, the practices of popular culture are considered as an ongoing dialogue between societies and people. The dialogic approach concerns not whether popular culture is oppressive or co-optive but how it accommodates tensions between opposition and co-optation at a historical moment.[76]

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[71]. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 100-104.

[72]. Ibid.

[73]. Ibid.

[74]. Ibid.

[75]. Ibid.

[76]. Ibid.

Marriage, Family, and the Life of Contemporary Korean Single Women

Viva Women presents diverse images of Korean single women and their relationships with men, family, and society. Dayoung, the protagonist, is a 29 year-old single woman; and Soyoung, Dayoung's sister, is a 22 year-old college student dedicating her life to realization of career ambitions. Dayoung thinks of marriage as the only salvation in her life and becomes so desperate. She falls for a scam while trying to develop her own business after breaking up with Jungsuk and ends up losing all the money she has saved and borrowed from parents. She is naïve enough to believe that a sexual relationship will automatically lead to marriage. It is not unusual for women at her age to be obsessed with marriage. Societal pressure about marrying on time, that is, before 30 to 35 for a Korean woman, is enormous. Her marriage and independence become a family issue. Until Dayoung's mother sees her two daughters married to reliable men, she cannot rest in peace. Often the ultimate blame for children's misbehavior or deviation from social norms falls on parents.

Dayoung encounters a harsh reality just because she is a single woman. There is also a strong stigma attached to a woman who has dated one guy for a long time and ended up not marrying him. It is like she is already taken, even if two break up, that is, dating this woman would make a man feel like dating a divorcee. As one of Dayoung's friends tells her at their mutual friend's wedding, Dayoung may not be able to date other men because of her long dating history with Jungsuk.

As Dayoung finds out that Nanhee, Jungsuk's wife, tried to fire her and possibly terminate the whole internal communication department using her father's power, Dayoung fights back. Unlike previous portrayals of her as a naïve and passive woman, she shows determination and aggressiveness to keep her job. Claiming that the company belongs to the employees, she mobilizes coworkers to protest against the tyranny of capitalistic domination. Other employees in her department are reluctant first to join the demonstration out of fear of losing their jobs. Coming from the petite bourgeois class, she becomes aware of her class, the class difference between herself and Nanhee, and questions unequal treatment of her by a small portion of upper-class people. Jungsuk betrays Dayoung partially for Nanhee's class, power, and money. From a lower bracket of society, he has got himself this far solely on his own by getting higher education at a prestigious university. He is seeking class mobility through education and marriage. As Nancy Abelmann points out in her qualitative study of Korean women's class mobility, it is not uncommon in reality for a well-bred, upper-class woman to "bargain on the potential of a man's personal and educational attributes independent of his family background."[77]

Only after Jungsuk betrayed her did Dayoung realize that she had been living somebody else's life: she has no saved money, no advanced career, no expanded experience, and suddenly no boyfriend and prospect of marriage. In the fifth episode, as Jungsuk declares their breakup, Dayoung says, "Without you, my life ends here." Breaking away from the seven year-old relationship is not easy for any woman, even if she is an independent person. But Dayoung sees this as *the* end of her life because she never had thought about what she could accomplish other than marriage. She has never taken her own life seriously and had no aspiration for accomplishment other than marriage.

Dayoung's mother is a "typical traditional woman." She had worked briefly as a clerk before marriage, but never worked outside the home after marriage. She has no hobbies or clubs to attend; she never has spent money on herself, not even to buy a nice, presentable jacket. Always she worries about preparing dinner for the family. In short, she is a very dedicated mother and wife who does not have her own life. The audience does not even get to know her name—she is merely a mother of Dayoung and Soyoung and is referred to as "Dayoung's mom." Having her daughters marry successfully is her only humble wish. After Jungsuk's declaration of the breakup with Dayoung, Dayoung's mother became enraged, but then she visits him to ask for reconsideration of his decision. Being a traditional woman who had known very little of the world outside the home, she became more desperate than Dayoung about marriage. Night after night, Dayoung's family goes through an episode of her mother's fits of rage and worry. Dayoung's mother blames herself for letting Dayoung get this old without marriage, not being more deeply engaged in her daughter's love life and for not pushing her marriage earlier. In this situation, while a woman in the end decides whom she will marry, the process of making a decision is hardly up to an individual.

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[77] Nancy Abelmann, "Women's Class Mobility and Identities in South Korea: A Gendered, Transnational, Narrative Approach," *Journal of Asian Studies* 56, no. 2 (1997): 405.

Out of worry and self-blame, Dayoung's mother arranges a meeting that forces Dayoung to see a man who is basically looking for a slave that can clean, take care of his parents, and produce sons. The existence of arranged meetings shows how much a matrimonial process is involved wth family affairs. Dayoung finally goes out to see the man her mother's acquaintance introduces. That this man is not given a name; thus the audience can mentally substitute him a real person they know because this situation is not too far from familiar lived experiences. The man, "Pabo," naming him for the sake of discussion here, asks how much money Dayoung has saved so far and lays out his requests at the beginning of what hardly resembles a romantic or friendly encounter. First, Pabo wants his wife to work, for he says a woman should be independent of a husband and help with financial burdens. But he clearly implies that he won't bear the heavy burden of being a sole breadwinner, even for his own family. Secondly, Pabo wants his wife to bear the entire responsibility of housework and taking care of his elderly parents and he does not see any need to do the same for his wife's family. Dayoung asks why he will not do the same while she is taking care of his parents who are not even related to her. He says, "Why should I take care of my wife's family? My sister doesn't live like that and my mom didn't live like that!" Dayoung, left almost speechless, asks, "Are you looking for a slave?" This remark upset Pabo and he bursts into rage, mumbling, "This is why I don't like an old woman to begin with," and he tells Dayoung, "What kind of woman are you? This is why you haven't married yet, obviously!"

Pabo seems an embodiment of some Koreans' mentality about marriage and single women. Women are encouraged to work mainly for financial reasons, not for their career ambitions. Pabo's request may be exaggerated but by no means is it all fictitious. Men may be overwhelmed by the enormous burden of being the sole breadwinner and may ask their wives for help. In fact, many married women have returned to the work force just for this reason since the 1980s.[78] But the process of making such a decision is not out of love but out of pure necessity, and Dayoung and Pabo are not even married yet. Laying out such a request at their first meeting is like bargaining for a better deal at a market. The arranged meeting becomes highly commodified. The issue of dowry and arranged marriage has been a continuous problem in Korea and many people have lamented the commodification of marriage. *Viva Women* addresses the criticism of commodified marriage market with comical depictions that engage viewers with their lived experiences.

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[78]. Laurel Kendall, *Getting Married in Korea: Of Gender, Morality, and Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 116.

Pabo's comment on not wanting to take care of his wife's family reflects continuing influence of Confucianism. As mentioned earlier, once a woman marries, she no longer belongs to her own family line and should be thoroughly absorbed into the husband's family linage. It is a deeply rooted prejudice in the Korean institution of marriage that once married, women are not to think of themselves as individuals, but as members of their husbands' families. *Viva Women* engages female audiences with a serious and heavy issue that average Korean women encounter one way or another at some point in their lives. The comic depictions of the issues make it more possible to discuss without the conservative backlash that is sometime brought by serious attempts to talk about women's issues in Korea.

In the sixth episode, Dayoung tries to get a bank loan for her new apartment and is rejected. The bank clerk says that only a small loan would be available for her, instead of the amount she requested. She asks why she is not eligible for the larger amount, knowing that her male coworker, who is also 30 years old and has a similar work history, received the amount she requested. The clerk hesitates to answer and tells her to get a cosigner like a married person, a male friend, or her parents. Dayoung then realizes that she was refused the loan because she is a 29-years-old *single* woman. Even though she does not have an impressive credit or work history, she has worked at one company for a long time and never been bankrupt. She does not have, at that moment, a man, like a husband or father, who can vouch for her credibility. Work and credit histories of single women do not get much acknowledgment.

Another of Dayoung's requests is rejected because of her single status. While she takes some time off until getting a new job, her father suggests she travel to America, which she always had wanted. In order to travel, Korean citizens need a VISA from the United States government. In general, getting a tourist VISA is not difficult, as long as one can prove one has sufficient funds for travel and that one has abided by the law. However, a single woman over, say, 27 or 28, may not get a U.S. VISA. This is very prevalent (and yet not talked about) in real life. This small detail makes *Viva Women* more believable and helps engage female audiences with the narrative of the show.

An event that involves Dayoung's whole family, even Dayoung's aunt and uncle, is her moving out of the family home and becoming independent of her parents. Her mother thinks it absurd that a single woman lives alone before marriage. For Dayoung's mother, or many other Koreans like Dayoung's aunt and uncle, a woman could move out of the family home only when she is properly married. Dayoung's uncle quotes an old saying, "Glass plates and women break easily if you let them run outside the home." This is often used to refer to overly active women and has a negative connotation about active women. Once a glass plate is broken, one can no longer use it; once a woman is "broken" through activities outside the home, she may be useless as a woman.[79] This implies two things: One, women who have lived outside the home may get to know too much about life and would not settle for less than they aspire to—and some women exemplify this. Two, these women living alone may be corrupted by social ills, like premarital sex, without the supervision of parents or husbands. Even in a real life, these negative assumptions about active, independent women are seldom spelled out but they are implied and well understood among people. Dayoung's father, who is egalitarian and very understanding, initially suggests that his wife to let Dayoung move out to avoid further emotional clash about marriage. How can there be no problem between a grown daughter, who is 29 years old and not married, and an overprotective mother who thinks marriage is the only goal in women's life? The family goes through fierce emotional conflict night after night about Dayoung's independence and about the prospect for her marriage. Having a 29-years-old daughter in one's home is an emotional and psychological crisis, and all the family members go through the ordeal together.

Soyoung, the sister of Dayoung, is the opposite of Dayoung. She embodies traits of the new generation of Korean women in the late 20th century: ambitious, financially savvy, career-oriented, individualistic, and determined. She declares that she will accomplish her career ambition first and then think about marriage. Recruited by her college professor to plan marketing strategy, she is doing an internship for a small but promising company while going to school. Soyoung does not understand why Dayoung thinks of marriage as the only option for women. In the midst of their mother's fits of rage and hysterical worry, Soyoung declares her independence. She can no longer tolerate the fighting and instability created at home by her sister's apparent lack of confidence and firm plans. The sisters do not communicate well. Dayoung sees Soyoung as self-centered and emotionally cold; and Soyoung sees Dayoung as a somewhat timid loser. Trying to convince her parents to let her move out of their home, Soyoung expresses her desire to advance in life by landing a "dream career," not by marrying a rich man. She believes that in order to succeed in love, one must succeed in a career.

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[79]. Helen R. Tieszen, "Korean Proverbs about Women" *Virtues in Conflict: Tradition and the Korean Woman Today*, ed. Sandra Mattielli (Seoul: Samhwa, 1977), 62.

Initially, Soyoung does not have a boyfriend. Upon starting her internship, she becomes increasingly attracted to Junha, who works at the same company. Junha, who also exemplify the new generation, was educated in America and claims gender equality at workplaces as well as in the home. Junha and Soyoung go through the considerable amount of bickering and fighting, as part of formula in romance comedy. But in the end they realize they share similar values: independence, equality, strong work ethics, etc. Even though Soyoung misunderstands at first Junha's offer of sharing an apartment as seduction, the misunderstanding is resolved and she accepts his offer. Their relationship resembles a partnership more than the unbalanced relationship between Dayoung and Jungsuk. While it should be acknowledged that Junha shows less belief in gender equality than he likes to claim, Soyoung is not as much a feminist as she wants to be either. Some old values are still embedded in the new generation, which Soyoung and Junha symbolize. In the middle of bickering, Junha complains that Soyoung talks back to a man too much; Soyoung also says, "a man should be this and that." Calling a woman talkative is generally negative and signals too much energy (*Ky*) in women, which traditionally considered detrimental to a male counterpart. An old proverb warns that there will be bad luck if a woman has so much energy that she overpowers a man's energy.

From her family, Soyoung was somewhat aloof in the beginning of the show but realizing what her sister has gone through after Jungsuk's betrayal, she turns to her family to offer support. When her parents find out everything-- Dayoung has fallen for a huge financial scam, lost all the money, and even

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fallen for a soft prostitution (at a "room salon" where selling alcoholic beverage and prostitution take place), Soyoung blames her mother's continuous and hysterical push for marriage (in the fourteenth episode): "She [Dayoung] didn't have to suffer alone if we understood and supported her more. What is wrong with getting old as a single woman? This won't be the end of the world even if she becomes old without marrying. It's all because of mom and me, we pushed her too far!" Soyoung feels a big part of the responsibility for her sister's continuous failure in getting a successful career because she had looked down on Dayoung for not being able to handle her own life and for lacking self-esteem. After all, she realizes that breaking away from a seven year-old relationship is not easy for anyone. Coming from a different education and socialization background, Junha says that Dayoung should bear ultimate responsibility for her own life no matter what happens. When Junha belittles Dayoung for the same reason as Soyoung had, Soyoung resents his comment and expresses how important family is in her life, saying, "Family *is* my life."

In the end, Soyoung starts married life before her sister does. At the end of the wedding ceremony, a bride throws the bouquet as a finale of the ceremony. Jonghea, who is a very close friend of Dayoung and Soyoung, declares that the ceremony is not over until she reads a new *Sam-jong-ji-do* for men. Jognhea tells Junha, the groom, "to be docile to your mother; be obedient to your wife; and be amenable to your daughter." She is evoking the Confucian rule *Sam-jong-ji-do* for women, (mentioned earlier), which prescribes that women should obey and be accountable to three men in their lives: father, husband and son. After all those hard times the family went through because of conflicting ideas of what women in general and single women in particular should be, Jonghea's proclamation of women's emancipation can liberate female viewers from the dominant rhetoric of single womanhood. Being humorous and witty, Jonhea's *Sam-jong-ji-do* for men also provides some utopian elements—that is, a total subversion of Korean patriarchal society by women.

Even though the dominant Korean societal consensus prescribes that women marry sometime before age 30 or 35, *Viva Women* does not portray Dayoung conforming to that consensus. Audiences are left to wonder if she would marry Hyuk sometime soon or if she would marry anyone at all. The viewers can create the ending they wish. If the show had followed the formula, Dayoung would have married Hyuk, for he plays a knight who saves a naïve, innocent, good woman deserving some reward after all. But twists and turns in "formula" suggest that Dayoung may consciously decide not to marry.

Work and Contemporary Korean Women

After Dayoung resigns her job at the company where Jungsuk and his wife work, she ventures out to find a new job. She applies for many jobs but keeps failing because of her age and the lack of substantial work experience. Some job interviewers ask her age before asking about her qualifications or work experience. Or they ask why she has not married yet. Dayoung has a college degree- but that is supposed to be used to find her husband, which she almost has. What can Dayoung do at her age, 29? First, she tries to open a small store selling cosmetics but falls for a scam and loses her apartment and all the money she borrowed from a loan shark. There is not much left for her to do other than simple menial jobs like washing dishes. She ends up washing dishes at a restaurant indeed but does not feel so bitter about it because she is working on her own to try to make a living.

Still she wants to make more money to get her apartment back from the loan shark and so resorts to a kind of job mainly filled by middle-aged women in Korea: selling insurance door to door. Her fourth job is another form of sales, but it is illegal: pyramid sales. Dayoung falls for it not knowing it is illegal, gets arrested, and spends a night in the police station, where she runs into her old high school friend who has been out of touch. Over the night, they talk about their lives for the past 10 years. The friend, Youngsuk, works at a bar (that she says does not promote prostitution) and suggests Dayoung to join her. Learning that a man whom Dayoung dated for seven years had betrayed her, Youngsuk unfolds her own story of failure with a man and implies that is how she got into the bar business. Out of desperation about the lost money and apartment, Dayoung seriously considers working at the bar and promised to visit to see what it is like. The kind of bar in *Viva Women* here is called, a "room salon" in Korea, which sells alcoholic beverages that are served by young female personal servants. Separate private rooms accommodate different groups of people, and in many places, a possible prostitution is assumed. After a couple of visits to the bar, Dayoung decides to work as a server until she can save enough money to repay her debt to the loan shark and get her apartment back.

The woman who owns the room salon also has had her own failure with a man and the discussion among Dayoung, Youngsuk and the owner of the room salon reveals how much they have held onto the idea of marriage as the only salvation in women's lives. One could attribute these women's choice of profession as a room salon server to their own weak personality or flaws in characters. But societal pressure of marriage on women's life does play a role. Parents think marriage is *the* occupation for women; people's prying into one's private life, wondering why some women are not married, can create serious confusion and conflict in one's life; institutionalized gender inequality at work places leaves women with few choices.

Viva Women shows that a woman like Dayoung can fall for an undesirable-- or even immoral, some people may think--occupation like a room salon server. People talk about the immorality and evil of prostitution and tend to attribute it to women's own flaws. By talking about serious but sensitive issues like prostitution relating to a very average woman, *Viva Women* challenges the social norms and rules. In the end, Dayoung gets financial help from the owner of the room salon and quits the job. While her situation is resolved by luck, *Viva Women* exposes controversial issues to audiences. Exposing contradictions against the well-established social norms (in this case, women fall to prostitution by their own faults) creates "the structural potential for oppositional readings by the viewers."[80] The mere act of exposing may not alter people's prejudice or provide viable solutions to the social problem, but create dialogue among audiences about the social problem.

Soyoung's work ethic is very different from Dayoung's even from the beginning. If Dayoung learns meaning of work in a woman's life through Jungsuk's breakup with her and the consequences of it, Soyoung learns through experience from her own family relationship. She is aware that she was not as welcomed as Dayoung when she was born because she is a second female child. The Koreans' strong preference for sons over daughters has been mainly influenced by Confucianism and dominant patrilineage. A son takes over a family after parents pass away, and if there is no son in a family, the family line is considered to end there. An eldest daughter is somewhat different; ironically, as an old saying goes, she is cherished for being a foundation for one's family. The proverb is a word of comfort for parents who are sad because their first child is not a son.[81] For this reason, second daughters are not thought to be welcomed – parents may console themselves with a first daughter but not a second daughter. In the eighth episode, Soyoung expresses deep feelings of resentment toward her parents saying, she has known that her mother and father always have favored Dayoung. One of the main reasons she wants to be independent by moving out of the family home is to prove her ability and worthiness to her parents.

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[80]. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 57.

Because of her particular position in the family, Soyoung seems to have learned how to survive and take care of herself without parental guidance or involvement. She managed to go to a prestigious college on her own ability and found jobs here and there to subsidize her small income while going to college. This is opposite to Dayoung's college years. Dayoung does not seem to have gone to a prestigious school as Soyoung does; she never took serious interest in her studies and future career; and she always had plenty of man followers willing to spend money for her. The meaning of work for Soyoung is not a reaction to other situations like breakup with a boyfriend. While Dayoung resorts to the idea of having a lifetime career and building her own life as a reaction to Jungsuk's betrayal, Soyoung always prioritized building a career before marriage or even having a boyfriend. During the internship, Soyoung wants to be acknowledged only for what she actually accomplishes in terms of work, not for getting along with people or doing favors for other workers.

Juxtapositions of Soyoung and Dayoung set up some structural tension within the portrayals of single women in the show. While these two sisters have their own contradictions and ambivalence in themselves, values they deem important show contradiction between them. Soyoung, independent and individualistic, is typical of a young single woman in Korean television shows. The depictions of Soyoung seem to reflect the fundamentally new form of women's identity, a form increasingly portrayed in the world of Korean television viewers. Commercial television programs may be expected to ignore Korean single women's issues and to present an idyllic view of a commodity-centered identity. With the enormous influx of foreign programs and the fierce domestic competition among cable systems and major networks, the media industry's imperial ambition—the desire to have all households watching—requires shows to be more believable and engaging to the lived experience of audiences.

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[81]. Helen R. Tieszen, "Korean Proverbs about Women" *Virtues in Conflict: Tradition and the Korean Woman Today,* ed. Sandra Mattielli (Seoul: Samhwa, 1977), 54.

Discussion and Conclusion

Viva Women reflected a continuing portrayal about single women's identity and social roles. This is not to argue that the many individuals involved in producing this artifact of popular culture decided consciously to make their efforts relevant to contemporary affairs. Rather, commercially driven mass culture seeks credibility with its audience by arbitrating the ideological tensions created by disparities between cultural promises and lived experiences. As the core tensions facing single women in Korean society change, the culture industry producers participate in bending discursive practices to social realities and shaping their works to speak to current social issues.

The dominant culture treats women's identity as a finite entity— that is, what women can be is finite—mother, daughter, wife or man-hating feminists. But it should be treated as an open-ended and dynamic process of construction and as a response to the present and practices derived from the past struggle. In *Viva Women*, Dayoung and Soyoung try to break away from the past notion of single womanhood. In doing so, these fictional characters adopt what Lipsitz calls "biofocality."[82] That is, on the one hand, the dominant culture imposes a certain identity on single women; but, on the other hand, Dayoung and Soyoung adopted a perspective that acknowledges but does not blindly accept the majority of culture's images of single women. *Viva Women* does not show whether Dayoung will marry Hyuk or not. There are some hints about Dayoung's future regarding marriage and work, but, nonetheless, viewers are left to create the ending they wish. Self-centered Soyoung accepts values she has rejected before and comes to terms with the meaning of family.

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[82]. George Lipsitz, *Time Passages: Collective Memory and American Popular Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 135.

The television show does not reflect our lives directly; but, rather it indirectly reflects the core contradictions of single women's lives and makes discussion of them possible. *Viva Women* enables viewers to see their own lives in relation to those of fictional others. Popular culture does not provide political solutions to social problems, but it can reveal social contradictions. By doing so, a popular culture text in this case may provide single women with one means of understanding and enduring the circumstances in which they found themselves. The *Viva Women* story line unfolds within the melodrama formula, but there are twists and turns in how the protagonists respond to the formulaic events (e.g. man's betrayal, family's pressure for marriage, social constraint on single women, etc). *Viva Women* reveals contradictions and tensions between dominant patriarchal notions of single womanhood and emerging resistance to it and offers alternative way of life for Korean single women.

Research on one popular culture text here ignored what Korean women would actually consume it. To understand the complex and contested process of meaning making requires three levels of examination. The study examined only a text of popular culture artifact. For future research, examining how producers come to terms with their own meaning of Korean single womanhood will be useful. Also examining how audiences view and consume a popular culture text will be also needed.

GODDESS WORSHIP:

COMMODIFIED FEMINISM AND SPIRITUALITY ON NIKEGODDESS.COM

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Paper to be presented to the Critical and Cultural Studies Division of the Association for
Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at its annual meeting in
August 2002

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: The author wishes to express her deeply felt gratitude to Dr. Ken Hillis of the University of North Carolina, in whose class this work originated. She would also like to thank Dr. Della Pollock and the students in her writing practicum for their feedback.

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Abstract

NIKEgoddess.com was textually analyzed to examine whether the website's discursive strategies constitute a form of commodity feminism. Findings concur with analyses of earlier Nike marketing messages in that the potentially disruptive ideological challenges posed by feminism are constrained by a focus on individual consumption; self-objectification and heterosexuality; immediate gratification; and apoliticism. NIKEgoddess.com differs in its infusion of spiritual themes, which, it is argued, further defuses the feminist traces and, also, constitutes a form of commodity spirituality.

Goddess Worship:

Commodified Feminism and Spirituality on NIKEgoddess.com

Launched in February 2001, NIKEgoddess.com—a site designed for "women on the move"—is a key component of Nike USA's new $20 million "Goddess" campaign, an integrated multimedia effort that targets American women aged 25-34. "Goddess" is Nike's bid to reposition itself in the increasingly lucrative women's apparel and footwear market after three years of stagnant sales and marketing mishaps. Based on market research showing that women in their target market think of physical fitness in noncompetitive terms and do not aspire to be professional athletes ("Nike Women," 2001), "Goddess" has been organized around the theme of "Everyday Athletes" ("Nike Women," 2001, p. 18). The campaign includes TV and magazine ads, a quarterly magazine/catalog ("magalog"), a new apparel line, a retail operation encompassing expanded women's sections at NikeTown stores and new NIKEgoddess "concept stores," and the website, NIKEgoddess.com ("Nike Expands Dialogue," 2001).

"Goddess" is the latest in Nike's highly-successful decade-long marketing effort aimed at American women. Although it first ran women's ads in the late 1980s, Nike achieved success with its 1991 "Empathy" print campaign, which used highly-produced multi-page magazine ads to convey the everyday life experiences and tribulations of women. Delivering a liberal feminist theme by angrily commenting on patriarchy and urging women to take charge of their lives (and bodies), the campaign helped Nike corner the women's market (Cole & Hribar, 1995). "Empathy" was the launching pad for a series of women's print and TV campaigns in the 1990s (e.g., "Dialogue" and "If You Let Me Play") that cemented Nike's self-styled status as a champion of women's empowerment through sport.[1] The company further inserted itself into

women's sports by marketing a shoe named after a female athlete, the Air Swoopes for WNBA player Sheryl Swoopes, and by sponsoring women's high school, collegiate, and professional athletes. Its endorsers have included Marion Jones, Mia Hamm, Lisa Leslie, Dawn Staley, Gabrielle Reese, Monica Seles, Picabo Street, and Swoopes.

Scholars such as Cole and Hribar (1995) and Goldman (1992) have criticized Nike's use of feminist rhetoric (e.g., the language of equality, assertiveness, and liberation) as being a form of commodity feminism, which occurs through the articulation of consumer objects to feminist values, meanings, and goals. They charge that commodity feminism aestheticizes and depoliticizes feminism by making it into a style defined by consumption. In so doing, commodity feminism encourages individualism, and not collective political engagement, and body dissatisfaction that can be assuaged by Nike products, and not radical action that might more directly transform women's subjugation. Furthermore, Cole and Hribar assert that Nike women's advertising works to idealize heterosexual, white, middle-class womanhood.

The work by Cole and Hribar (1995) and Goldman (1992; Goldman & Papson, 1998) provides a valuable starting point for a critical examination of current Nike marketing discourse targeted to female consumers. Over the past decade, Nike advertising and marketing has appropriated and also validated "postfeminist" sentiment (e.g., feelings of liberation but also of anger), reformulating its message and strategy at several junctures (Goldman & Papson). Although other academic research has been conducted in the interim (see Stabile, 2000, for an analysis of Nike's simultaneous appropriation of African American images and labor in commercial discourse and southern U.S. factories, respectively), recent Nike advertising has not been scrutinized. The widespread adoption and ensuing commercialization of Web technologies. along with women's increased usage—they now constitute a majority of American online users

(U.S. Department of Commerce, 2000)—have accelerated online marketing efforts aimed at women. Both the scope of "Goddess" campaign and Nike's use of the Web pose several interesting questions, among them, How are gender, race, and class constructed on NIKEgoddess.com?, and Can all women be goddesses? Using commodity feminism as the guiding analytical framework, this study will update previous work by textually analyzing NIKEgoddess.com's appeals to women. It is hoped that this analysis might further our understanding of the larger and interconnected sociocultural processes involved in the incorporation of women as consumers of sporting goods and the increasing commodification of the Web. As Bryson (1987) notes, sports have been constructed as a masculine preserve. Because advertising is a powerful system of representation (Rakow, 1992), Nike's discourses to female consumers have within them the potential to both disrupt and reinforce patriarchal ideology.

Nike, the World's Number One Sports and Fitness Company

With over $9 billion in global sales, Nike is the number one sports and fitness company in the world; it sells in 140 countries and is a Fortune 500 company ("Nike, Inc.," 2002). Nike grew from $4.8 billion worldwide sales in 1995 to over $9 billion in 2000 (Cassidy, 2001b). Nike's success has largely been fueled by, and a contributing factor to, the growth of the sports and fitness industry and the increasing pervasiveness of athletic footwear and apparel as casualwear across most marketing segments.

Nike stands above competitors, such as Reebok and Adidas, because of its marketing machine. Nike's corporate symbols, its swoosh logo, slogans (e.g., Just Do It, There Is No Finish Line), and spokespersons (e.g., Michael Jordan, Bo Jackson, Tiger Woods, and Andre Agassi), dominate the global landscape. They make Nike into a "core cultural icon" (Goldman & Papson, 1998, p. 168). Nike is one of the world's top advertisers and has worked with Portland, Oregon-based ad agency Wieden + Kennedy, since 1987, at about the time Nike achieved global dominance and cultural significance as a sports and fitness company. Goldman and Papson (1998) argue that Nike's advertising style owes to a number of narrative and stylistic elements, which include a distinct manner of addressing viewers and readers, photographic style, appropriation and re-working of popular culture, and often intentionally provocative nature. Alternately cynical and humorous, the ads feature recurrent themes of emancipation, willpower, and transcendance (e.g., the slogans "Just Do It" and "There Is No Finish Line"; Goldman & Papson). Nike ads are about simultaneously pushing the body beyond its capabilities, not accepting limitations in any way, resisting authority, and commenting on the ironies of life and of capitalism. One of its TV spots features a male runner with the following voiceover—"Ric Munoz, Los Angeles. 80 miles every week. 10 marathons every year. HIV positive." (Goldman & Papson, p. 153)—whereas another one features NBA player Charles Barkley looking straight into the camera and declaring, "I am not a role model" (p. 84).

Nike Women's Advertising

For years, Nike, which began as Blue Ribbon Sports in the early 1960s, focused its marketing efforts on male runners, eventually becoming the leading athletic shoe company in 1981 (Cole & Hribar, 1995). Even into the 1970s and 1980s, as many women became interested in physical fitness and exercise—one outcome of the opportunities made possible by enforcement of Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, a federal policy that demanded gender equity in federally-funded educational institutions, including athletic programs[2]—Nike was content to allow other marketers, in particular, Reebok, capture this market. A main impetus for this, according to Cole and Hribar (1995), was the company's fear that marketing to women might tarnish its "authentic and serious" image (p. 359) with men.[3] In 1982, Reebok unfurled a

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highly-successful women's workout shoe called Freestyle. In the late 1980s, it crafted a workout program, Step Reebok, that was marketed to aerobics clubs and directly to consumers as a VHS tape. This move would further substantiate Reebok as a company that focused on women.

In the late 1980s, though, after obtaining dominance in men's footwear, Nike sought other expansion opportunities. Spurred by Reebok's success, the company began to pursue the emerging women's market (Cole & Hribar, 1995). In 1987, Nike ran its first women's television ad, depicting triathlete Joanne Ernst running. The voiceover advised her to "Just Do It," yet the closing line admonished the runner with the quip, "And it wouldn't hurt if you stopped eating like a pig" (Cole & Hribar, 1995, p. 360), something that generated controversy with critics and audiences.

After restrategizing—this included focus group research and the hiring of copywriter Janet Champ and art director Charlotte Moore at Wieden + Kennedy—Nike launched a glossy print campaign called "Empathy" in 1991. The ads, usually multi-page inserts with several pages of prose and stark photographs, simulated autobiographical narrative excerpts that seemed to encapsulate an "everyday" woman's daily experiences. The ads "spoke to the process of developing a self over the course of a lifetime—a self that corresponds neither to the fixed ideal defined by the male gaze nor to the female plasticity that accommodates to other people's vision of you, and of your life" (Goldman & Papson, 1998, p. 127). Cole and Hribar (1995) describe the ads' impact: "When we read the ads, we feel as if we have found a friend who understands, who can see from our point of view, who knows what it is we want" (p. 360). Women's sales increased 25-28% a year in the three years following (Cole & Hribar, 1995). In addition, Nike received more than 250, 000 phone calls providing positive feedback or requesting reprints. Nike won considerable acclaim, including industry awards and positive media comment.

The "therapeutic ethos" (Goldman & Papson, 1998, p. 128) that was manifested in the "Empathy" campaign segued into a similar TV campaign called "Dialogue" in 1993, which "constructed the appearance of soothing, therapeutic spaces within a world that otherwise seems to be rushing past." These three spots were followed two years later by the previously-mentioned print/TV campaign called "If You Let Me Play" that dramatically espoused the benefits of exercise and sports for girls and young women. The timing seemed prescient. The next year, in 1996, more female athletes participated in the 1996 Summer Olympic Games than at any time before, earning the event the moniker "Games of female athletes" (Kinnick, 1998, p. 1). In 1999, the Women's World Cup soccer tournament boasted an opening-game crowd of 78,972, the highest ever recorded for a women's sporting event (Lieber, 1999). Concurrently, Nike was actively working to cultivate women's sports, by promoting the Air Swoopes, making other endorsement deals with female athletes, and sponsoring women's sports teams and events.

As women's sports became big business, Nike's women's ads focused more on team sports than on individuals; they became "visceral, aggressive, and competitive"[4] (Goldman & Papson, 1998, p. 120). A commercial spot featuring U.S. Women's national team soccer members entitled "Vows" illustrates the focus on team unity and resolve. In the ad, when one player must have a cavity filled, her teammates all agree to have fillings, as well, saying sternly, "Then, I will have one." In another ad, several teammates join Tisha Venturini on a date.

As a genre, Nike's women's advertising uses several discursive strategies. These include the framing of exercise and fitness to be about lifelong activity, and not pursuit of mastery and celebrity; the use of sincerity, and not irony; a decrease in, or absence of, media reflexivity; a greater attention to women's experiences; and the extensive use of written or oral text (Goldman & Papson, 1998). Another practice includes the subversion of what has come to be viewed as the fixed male spectator position in print and TV ads. In Nike's women's ads, girls and women often face the camera, standing upright, with shoulders squared. These strategies contribute greatly to making the ads seem radical and empowering and why they resonate with female audiences. (See Berger, 1972, and Mulvey, 1975, for a discussion of women's visual representation.) Referring to the "If you let me play" spots, Goldman and Papson (1998) assert that the ads "broke through the clutter not just because of its message about women's health and well-being, but also because it violated conventions about how ads address or hail us" (p. 134).

Nike Women's Ads as a Form of Commodity Feminism

In its embrace of themes associated with liberal feminism, such as empowerment, equality, and liberation, Nike women's advertising reflects and contributes to a relatively new form of cross-sector commercial marketing to female consumers called "commodity feminism" (Goldman, Heath, & Smith, 1991, p. 336), wherein "women consumers [are] encouraged to use consumer goods to mark off an autonomous, individualized subjectivity, rather than to ensure the compliance with traditional gender roles" (Cole & Hribar, 1995). Its name a pun of Marx's notion of commodity fetishism (1976), commodity feminism masks the essence of consumer goods as being produced in an inherently patriarchal system for patriarchal gain (Cole & Hribar; Goldman, Heath, & Smith). As Cole and Hribar (1995) note, Nike exemplifies a post-feminist[5] embrace of self-actualization and empowerment that is "embedded in bodily maintenance and the consumption of Nike products" (p. 362). This feel good about yourself/feel angry about society/buy Nike products brand of feminism is most obviously problematic when we consider the company's labor and environmental practices which serve to disenfranchise many women in overseas countries. The inherent contradictions in Nike's message of female empowerment became increasingly apparent in 1996 when the company's labor and environmental practices in

countries such as Vietnam, Pakistan, Indonesia, Thailand were reported by mainstream news organizations, accompanied by allegations of widespread abuses (Stabile, 2000). A vehement anti-Nike protest began that had as its larger focus action against multinational corporations and negative globalization processes. (This is not to say that Nike had avoided controversy before; Stabile discusses the company's early 1990s implications with inner-city violence stemming from high-priced footwear.)

According to Goldman, Heath, and Smith (1991), commodity feminism is enacted through "binary semiotic oppositions" (p. 336) that associate feminism with femininity. Signs that "connote independence, participation in the workforce, individual freedom, and self-control" (Goldman, Heath, & Smith, p. 337) are associated with those signifying traditional femininity. Goffman (1976) has identified several cues that are used in advertising to indicate traditional female gender roles. These include (1) relative size (women are shown as shorter than men); (2) feminine touch (women are shown caressing objects with fingers or their face, whereas men grasp and manipulate items); (3) function ranking (women are not shown in supervisory, instructional, or executive roles); (4) family (women are enmeshed in parenting duties while men are located outside of the family circle); (5) ritualization of subordination (women are lowered physically, e.g., hunching or recumbent, lowering their face, bending their knee, canting postures, childlike guises, clowning, smiling); and (6) licensed withdrawal (e.g., women are shown turning gaze, lowering head, covering the face or mouth, eye drifting, holding onto male clothing).

This intercutting of feminist and feminine signifiers renders an ambivalent message. Liberation is directly related to consumption, and individual autonomy is manifested as a celebration of being able to choose from consumer goods and to represent one's style and

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freedom that way, something which both Cole and Hribar (1995) and Goldman, Heath, and Smith (1991) argue ultimately deprives feminism of its transformative potential. The shampoo product Pantene and its famous "Don't hate me because I'm beautiful" slogan exemplify commodity feminism. In TV spots for the shampoo, happy and authoritative young women are depicted, who look straight at the camera, but these subjects adhere strictly to traditional standards of beauty and are focused on appearance and gaining men's attention. The ads also suggest competition between women. (See Figure 1 for a conceptual mapping of commodity feminism.)

Challenges to Nike Hegemony

Even with record-setting profits in 1997, Nike was hampered in the late 1990s by a variety of issues: inventory problems, marketing mishaps, changing footwear fashions, retail bankruptcies, stronger competition from Adidas and Skechers, for example, the declining popularity of pro sports after Michael Jordan retired from the NBA, and a backlash against consumer brands (Armstrong & Kotler, 2000; Cassidy, 2001b; Goldman & Papson, 2001; Lefton, 1998; Williams, 2001). Nike, which had long mocked mainstream consumer culture, was viewed by many as a global behemoth, it was now part of the "Establishment" (Goldman & Papson, 1998).

On the marketing front, Nike made a serious misstep with a horror movie-inspired TV ad called "Horror," that ran during the summer 2000 Olympics. The spot featured distance runner Suzy Hamilton fleeing from a crazed home intruder in a sports bra and panties. Even though the superbly-conditioned Hamilton escapes her attacker,[6] critics charged that the commercial trivialized violence against women. (Cassidy, 2001b). The ad was pulled after only a few airings. The criticism that emerged—that Nike was anti-woman—only added to the sentiment held by many women that Nike catered to men in its marketing and design (Williams, 2001). (Many women also believed that Nike products were unfashionable [Harris, 2001; Wong, 2001].)

The "Goddess" Campaign

With lagging sales and flat growth, Nike restrategized by developing new product lines and innovations, creating sub-brands, entering new, often overseas markets, and de-emphasizing the swoosh logo (Armstrong & Kotler, 2000). Nike has sought to emphasize non-professional athletes across its enterprise, as emblematized by its re-appropriation of co-founder Bill Bowerman's axiom, "If you have a body, you're an athlete" ("New Nike Campaign," 2001, para. 1). A key initiative was to regain control of the women's market—Women's sporting goods account for only 14% of Nike's global sales ($1.5 of $9 billion; Cassidy, 2001a)—which represented a growth opportunity in a mature athletic industry. In 1999, for example, sales of women's sports apparel grew 6.8% to $15.7 billion, whereas men's only grew 2.6% to $15.6 billion ("Nike tries," 2000). Furthermore, women account for 80% of all sports apparel purchases, according to the NPD Group. Though men's footwear sales were at $7.77 billion for the 12 months ending January 31, 2001, women's footwear sales were still impressive at $5.18 billion, according to the NPD Group (Wong, 2001).

After an 18 month period, during which it created a women's division, Nike implemented the "Goddess" campaign in January 2001 to promote apparel, footwear, and gear to women aged 25-34 ("New Nike Campaign," 2001). The campaign was based on market researching showing that women did not see themselves as professional athletes, that they struggled to find balance in their lives and to negotiate their multiple roles, and that they conceived of physical activity and fitness in very broad terms. According to Clare Hamill, V.P. of Nike's Global Women's Business,

> We recognize that for some time now women have been making sports and fitness their own. Aerobics were about taking dance, something many women love, into the gym. Boom in home exercise videos and in walking are about how to include fitness in our busy lives and bring some balance. As a sports and fitness company, we need to look at sports and fitness as part of the 24-hour day women live and help them find new ways to create the balance they seek.
>
> This also means broadening the discussion of sports and fitness. We want to find the everyday woman in elite athletes and the athlete in the everyday woman. ("Nike Expands Dialogue," 2001, para 2-3)

Thus, "Goddess" reconceptualizes the broader "Everyday Athletes" theme to incorporate the idea that any woman can be an athlete. In addition, the campaign's title mines Nike corporate mythology by alluding to the company's namesake, Nike, the Greek goddess of victory (something that is truly ironic, given Nike's long history of focusing on male athletes).

"Goddess" is a sweeping multimedia campaign that integrates print magazine ads and a custom publication, TV commercials, retail operations, and the website NIKEgoddess.com. In TV spots (that were first shown during the 2001 Super Bowl), "ordinary-looking" women are shown engaged in a number of activities while voiceovers declare "I wear dresses. I wear muscles," "I've never owned a ball. I sweat," and "I'm not Marion Jones. I'm a runner" ("Nike Women," 2001). Four 15-second spots focused on individual athletes (i.e., a runner, boxer, swimmer, and a "yogini"), and 30- and 60-second spots featured montage shots of these "Everyday Athletes" ("New Nike Campaign," 2001). Print ads placed in national women's publications such as Glamour, Mademoiselle, Teen People, and Self were similarly themed (e.g., an ad featuring a woman in football gear with the text, "I paint my toenails. I play football";

Cassidy, 2001a). The quarterly magalog was sent to subscribers of SI for Women, Teen People, and In Style and was also distributed at Nike Town, The Finish Line, and Nordstrom stores ("Nike Expands Dialogue," 2001). The magalog NIKEgoddess Magazine showcases Nike products and also includes articles on travel, relaxation, fitness, and health (Footwear News, 2001).

Launched in February 2001, NIKEgoddess.com is, in many ways, a centerpiece of the campaign. The site was developed by Cole & Weber Interactive around the theme of "What Moves You?" (See Figure 2.) Describing the agency's ethnographic focus group research, Cole & Weber "user experience director" Carrie Vincent, says, "We were immersed in five weeks of interviews, sending cameras to all the women who took pictures of their friends, their dogs, their gym, their closets; just about everything that they were doing in their lives as well as collecting schedules of their daily activities. This, in addition to hearing them talk, allowed us to gather some vital information like the fact that sport is only one component of the jam-packed crazy days that women had. These insights led us into different means of accessing navigating to the content on the Web site that's available" (Wakelin, 2001, para. 6). The research findings revealed that women

> Strongly believe being active isn't something they do, it's something they are; Want information that motivates and inspires them; Crave new ideas for doing more with their life; easily multi-task; Do a variety of physical activities; they don't just "work out" to get fit; Believe that exercise isn't just physical; women get emotionally stronger/gain confidence from activity; Don't look up to female athletes; they are not perceived as "feminine" or in keeping with their personal goals. Want to stay active to keep life balanced between work and home, which allows them to be confident and look good;

> Wear clothes that are flexible; go from one activity to another without changing (aerobics to grocery shopping); Are on the Web and aren't afraid of buying online. (Harris, 2001, Sidebar)

Nike heavily promoted an early feature of the site, "mood-driven navigation," that allowed a visitor to navigate the site based on how she or he was feeling that day (Wakelin, 2001). (See Figure 3.) If "feel like shopping?" was selected, the user was taken offsite to the NikeTown e-commerce site; "feel like I need a boost?," was presented with tips on doing tai chi; "ready for adventure," given tips on horseback riding or introduced to a rock climber; and "totally energized," shown how to try ultimate frisbee, read about Marion Jones, or urged to consider becoming a race volunteer. Other categories included "kind of frazzled" and "up for a challenge" ("www.nikegoddess.com," 2001; see Table 1 to for a matrix of key marketing and structural features).

Method

The purpose of this study was to build upon the previous discussion of commodity feminism in applying the analytical framework to NIKEgoddess.com. A textual analysis of the website was conducted during the period between December 2001 and March 2002. The protocol for this study followed Hall's description in Paper Voices (1975),[7] as further outlined by Curtin (1995). I first deconstructed the rhetorical and visual strategies (i.e., codes, content, tone, symbols, metaphors, assumptions, and beliefs) used on the website, with the purpose of decentering the text. Then, I reconstructed these elements to uncover dominant, or preferred, meanings, and determine how the reader is positioned.

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Analysis

Running throughout NIKEgoddess.com is a strong focus, rendered by visual and written text, on individuality: what makes the user unique and special. The headline for a profile appearing in the Magazine section, a 16-year old dog musher who is legally blind (the only non-professional athlete profiled during the analysis and also the only representation of disability found), featured the headline, "I use my fear as fuel." (See Figure 4.) The same pattern was followed for articles on professional athletes in the Athletes section. In March, interviews with the two profiled athletes, Jen Holdren and Stacy Dragila, were headed with "Why Jen Rocks" and "Why Stacy Rocks," respectively. (See Figure 5.) These headlines speak, in the first case, to the athlete's courageousness, and they portray the subject as being a unique and cool individual.

This focus on individuality is deeply entwined with consumption. Consider the Athletes section, again. At the end of each brief interview (with Holdren and Dragila in March and hockey players Cammi Granato and A.J. Mleczko in December) was a subsection entitled "NIKE products I love," which contained three to four images of items personally endorsed by the athlete. When selected, the athlete's comments on the apparel or footwear item appears on screen (e.g., "I wear this sweater everywhere. Last night I wore it to the movies."). Consider, also, the text which appears on the subscriber page, "Be the first to know about cool new products. Get NIKEgoddess magazine. Learn about events in your area for active women. Quick and easy checkout at Niketown.com" The focus here on "products I love" and "be(ing) the first to know about cool new products" promotes an individualism constructed on consumption.

Two regular site features provide more subtle examples. The Try It On page, wherein users select different mix-n-match items to appear on a virtual model, features a tab called "Rate It," in which a user can give a particular item between one and five stars. The right corner of the page contains a box with product images, accompanied by the header, "YOUR PIX: Gear you love." (See Figure 6.) Another regular feature called Shout Out (which was accompanied on the main page in December with an image of a woman's mouth stretched wide open) asks registered users to submit their comments in response to a specific query. In December, the site queried readers on their "personal mantra." In March, the query asked for "my definition of personal beauty." (See Figure 7.) The Shout Out page, which also serves the Registration and Sign In page, featured a photographic image of a smiling Asian woman, revealed by caption to be Addie Yungmee, Hip-Hop Dancer, and a box containing comments sent in by users and selected by staff for inclusion. (My definition of personal beauty is…."Inner peace." Jackie, New York, NY; "Generosity." Bridget, Chicago, IL; "Grace." Gayle, Santa Barbara, CA; "Good looks and a great attitude." Tania, Santa Cruz, CA; "Strong muscles and a huge smile." Audrey, Columbus, OH; and "Style and poise." Kate, Boston, MA"). This main header read, "GIVE IT UP" and the text opened with, "Mouth Off and let the world know what you think."

The Shout Out feature and use of registration, seemingly, foster the sense that user input matters, that users can gain a voice by contributing, that this might be a community. However, the end effect seems strangely disempowering, as users may only contribute a short (40 character) response to the pre-determined query, and selection for inclusion on the site is at the discretion of staff. There is no forum or message board in order to interact with other visitors. There is no other feedback mechanism. Collective strength or unity with other women is never visually rendered, except for one image of three hockey players (Granato, Mleczko, and Tara Mounsey) on the Registration and Sign In page in December. The three-page profile of the dog musher, for instance, ended with a link to a nonprofit educational project providing other inspiring GirlStories. But, on this site, girl power seems to be an individual experience.

The hint of showing a diverse array of womanhood, portraying the "Everyday Athlete," and presenting strong women, seemed ambivalent, in many ways. On the one hand, the models were, overall, ethnically diverse, were represented in ways that asserted their subject position, and were shown with muscles. Ethnic diversity was strongest in March, when the main page featured two images of Asian-appearing women, along with models who appeared Black and White. (See Figure 8.) Also, one of the two March athletes, Jen Holdren, Volleyball player, also appears to be Black. One of the Asian models actually appeared as a cartoon image of a young woman, shown smiling and with punkish brown hair in a Java applet hyperlinked to the interactive Try It On page. On the main page, this applet rotates between four different outfits, showing different sportwear combinations. The March Athlete feature with pole vaulter Stacy Dragila exemplifies how boldly gender is sometimes represented on the site. In a true warrior pose, Dragila is shown stoicly facing the viewer in a sports camisole that exposes her taut upper physique; she has her pole grasped firmly in hand. (See Figure 9.) Other pages featured that month featured a kickboxer demonstrating a series of arresting and sensual moves. (See Figure 10.)

At the same time, gender representation often adheres to traditional codes, which often creates a sense of ambivalence. Whereas there is a great deal of ethnic diversity, all of the models are petite and of average height—there are no fat women; whereas most models are muscled, only one is differently-abled (i.e., the blind dog musher, and this is only apparent from reading the text). The December main page, for example, features a young White woman as the primary image in the products panel, who is looking straight at the viewer (co-opting the male gaze), but her eyes are drifted upward in a glaze (licensed withdrawal). (See Figure 11.) The representation of physicality is also conflicted, in that the active images, with one exception, focus on dance movements and poses rather than active engagement in sporting activity. With the exception of the pole vaulter mentioned above, none of the athletes is shown handling an instrument (feminine touch). The representation of all of the women on the site, including identified pro athletes, concurs with the traditional representation of women in advertising, as described by Goffman (1979). Most women are smiling (ritualization of subordination). Whereas the banner appearing on the December Athletes page featured Granato and Mleczko in their uniforms, they were not shown engaged in their masculine-identified sports; they were posing. (See Figure 12.) Other images in the banner featured them in "glamour shots."

Several strategies were used to convey the athletes' femininity, their sex appeal, and their heterosexuality. For instance, in her interview section, Holdgren is queried, "If I were invited to the Oscars I'd wear….," to which she responds (in a perfect marketing pitch), "A pair of Nike Prestos and a designer dress." In response to another query, "My last words… ." she responds, "you know there's nothing wrong with wanting to look nice." Granato responds to the query, "I'm embarrassed to admit it but…" with "I love boy bands." Femininity is also reinforced with the comments the athletes made in the "NIKE products I love" section (e.g., Cammi Granato's comment on a Seamless Mock Neck: "This shirt is both strong and feminine. It's also great to wear as a layer under clothes because it's so thin." The header and caption on the main page leading into the December Athletes story reads, "Puck Off: Two kick-ass [illegible]men of hockey dish on products and lifestyle."

Sexual references are common, from the call to register ("'GIVE IT TO ME': Sign up for the NIKEgoddess newsletter and enjoy the perks.") to the description of Holdren as "one of the hottest volleyball players on the beach." The Athletes page accompanying Holdren's interview had the header, "'Passion In Action'" See their favorite gear and learn more about why these

athletes ROCK!" (To one of queries, "In the summer...," asked of her, Holdren responds, "I live in my bathing suit, an itsy bitsy bikini.") At the same time that it promotes its subjects' strong sexuality, though, NIKEgoddess.com also claims them as heterosexual. Mleczko responds to the query, "The hardest part about being a superstar hockey player is…" with "Traveling and being away from my husband." Holdren is described in the following terms: "Even though she's married to another volleyball player and has two beautiful children, she is still dedicated and passionate about her sport." These strategies concur with work by Creedon (1994) and Pfister (1987) on the coverage of female athletes in sports media in that personal appearance, family values, and (hetero)sexuality often take center stage, a strategy that Kane (1996) has termed the "female apologetic" (p. 121). On one end of the continuum, coverage emphasizes female athletes' wholesomeness. By downplaying athleticism and focusing, instead, on femininity, heterosexuality, and family-centeredness, sports coverage seeks to counter longstanding fears that women's sports are unnatural. This works to subvert the potential for sport to empower women.

As illustrated, NIKEgoddess.com pivots centrally around individual consumption. Furthermore, all gratification (from how one feels, looks, vacations, even does civic duty) is instantaneous. This is most obvious in the early "mood-driven navigation" ("www.nikegoddess.com," 2001) but it is also apparent in other features. After signing up, for example, the user is told, "Congratulations! You have been successfully crowned a NIKE Goddess." Quick work, being a goddess. And relaxing. In December, the site ran a feature on Park City, Utah, in the Magazine section, in anticipation of the Winter Olympic Games with the header, "A GIRL CANNOT LIVE ON SNOW ALONE…PARK CITY EXTRACURRICULAR, SPOTS TO WET YOUR WHISTLE." The feature contained budget tips for its young but

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decidedly upwardly mobile audience. The March Registration and Sign-In page featured a promotion ("Win a weekend getaway in LA: We'll throw in a $500 shopping spree.") that was accompanied by a low-angle shot of a model with arms raised, as in victory (alluding, perhaps, to the goddess Nike). No content pertains to the difficulties arising from gendered leisure and work.

The lead-in for the Fall 2001 Magalog feature--"Play is a four letter word you should use every day. Plus kick your wanderlust into high gear with our look at Moab, UT."—says it all: NIKEgoddess.com gives more credence to recreation than to politics. Resistance to patriarchy is limited to short, edgy catchphrases, which are often quite contradictory: the previously mentioned "PUCK OFF: Two kick-ass women of hockey dish on products and lifestyle." Civic engagement is limited to quick feel-good actions: One of the March Magazine features focused on Nike's Reuse-a-Shoe program that urged users to donate their old sneakers at NIKETOWN stores (See Figure 13). In response to "Why Stacy Rocks," Dragila is described in the following manner: "Not only has she broken eight world records in her sport, she's also made a point to give back. She's a mentor with the Big Sisters and donates money to several charities."

There is an equally strong focus on the metaphysical, which is rendered in NIKEgoddess's name, design, and content. The main page, for instance, paints a strong picture of the sky with a crisp white background foreclosed by a textured blue top edge. (See Figure 11.) The previously-described medium shot image of the young woman with wind-swept hair in a black tunic in the products panel shows her looking upward and outward, as if looking to the heavens. A focus on consciousness and inner serenity is also made prominent with two multimedia Flash features, Experience Triax and Experience the Weave, found on the Products page in March. (See Figure 10.) It is also manifested in the use of standalone, disembodied product images. This was most pronounced in December, in which the main page java applet for the Try It On feature (then called "Mix-n-Match) featured no human model.

Spirituality and the mind-body interconnection are infused in the site. The December Shout Out query, "My personal mantra is ...," exemplifies this. The published mantras included the following: "Beauty lies in the hands of the beer holder." Jenny, Tampa, FL; "Whatever you do, just keep breathing." Patricia, Tuczon, AZ; "Can't is a word you use when you don't want to." Janine, Atlanta, GA; "Don't be afraid." Caroline, New York, NY; "No regrets." A.J., Nantucket, MA; and "Dare." Jennifer, Washington, D.C." This desire to go inward is also visible in other sections. Holdren, for example, is asked, "My definition of beauty is... ," to which she responds, "Inner beauty. I think the more you get to know someone, the more beautiful they become." Dragila responds to the query, "When I'm in the zone...," with "I can actually slow down time and feel everything."

As previously mentioned, NIKEgoddess.com—true to its theme of "What moves you?"—features its models in sweeping, flowing poses, with site design also contributing to this allusion. (See Figure 14.) The Experience the Weave multimedia feature, for example, includes two photo series of muscular White women with long hair kickboxing and striking very active poses. The aesthetic sensibility is decidedly "Eastern." (In fact, a magazine feature on yoga appeared in Summer 2001, and, in March, the site featured two Asian-appearing models.) The movement theme is rendered best by a flash sequence with Holdren literally stepping into spring. The volleyball player is shown entering the frame from the left in ski attire. As she moves right, successive images show her shed her outerwear for lighter clothes, settling on shorts and a t-shirt; she moves from skiing to skipping, jumping, and diving. (See Figure 15.)

Reconstruction

The deconstructive analysis uncovered five prominent themes that are woven throughout NIKEgoddess.com—Personal Expression and Individuality; Appearance, Sexuality, and Relationships; Consumption and Immediate Gratification; Apoliticism; and Spirituality. These thematic elements are used to advance the myth of postfeminism – that the feminist struggle for gender equity has been achieved, that the Women's Movement is a thing of the past, and the fruits of its labor are here for our amusement. True to the "Goddess" campaign's unifying theme of "Everyday Athletes," the site works to promote the notion that all women are, and can be, athletes (referencing the axiom, "If you have a body, you are an athlete); by extension, that they can all be goddesses; and that taking care of one's body is a route to upward mobility. The preferred reader is positioned as a carefree, single, young woman who enjoys the good life and wants to move up the ladder.

The articulation of the goddess metaphor with mind, body, and spirit, as represented by the site's inclusion of yoga, its call to find balance in one's life, its heavenly layout, and the sweeping allusion to movement found in design elements, also fosters the myth of postcolonialism – that the "East" and "West" can be fused in a seamless process. More subtly, the site fosters a "technoromanticism" (Coyne, 1999) in perpetuating a utopian construction of information technology as a "means of realizing the Enlightenment project of a world where reason holds sway over unreason, and as a consequence people are free, equal, and in harmony" (pp. 25-26).[5] This ideal is rendered, by the association of postfeminism with technological empowerment: The user is empowered by being able to try on numerous outfits (using the interactive Mix-n-Match/Try It On feature) in the comfort of her or his living room, for example.

As a marketing vehicle, NIKEgoddess.com contains targeted messages. Yet, as with any cultural product, it is open to alternative readings. The oppositional and highly skeptical readings

that are opened up by this text emerge from Nike's well-known labor and environmental practices and its status as one of the world's largest and most dominant corporations. First, it might seem doubtful to some users that Nike genuinely cares about individual "goddesses" or Girl Power, given its history of favoring men's sports and, also, its embeddedness into the sports-media complex (i.e., business prerogatives). Second, Nike's notorious involvement with human rights abuses through its overseas factories allows for a reader to question the site's commingling of East and West (e.g., prominent use of Asian models). Third, despite its "Everyday Athletes" theme, the site favors professional athletes; this bias opens up the possibility for a counter-reading that questions the assertion that any woman can be an athlete.

A full reading of the site must analyze what has been omitted from the site. Surprisingly, there is very little information about Nike, the company, as can be found on NIKEbiz.com or NIKE.com (beyond the March Magazine P.R.. feature on the Reuse-a-Shoe program). Although the logo for NIKEgoddess.com is found on all pages, the swoosh appears rarely. Perhaps, these omissions are intended to divert any attention from Nike's contradictory production and promotional processes? Furthermore, the NIKEgoddess.com logo, it could be argued, creates a new sign value (Goldman & Papson, 1998) that further deemphasizes the company's position. Perhaps, not surprisingly, Nike resists covering its relationship to women's sports and fitness, even though the company lauds itself on the Nikebiz website. There is no explication of the goddess metaphor, as well. NIKEgoddess.com, then, becomes a very focused vehicle intended for a specific purpose: to facilitate e-commerce transactions and provide minimal content, without opening up any possible resistant readings.

Conclusion

This study's findings concur with earlier work (Cole & Hribar, 1995; Goldman, 1992) in identifying Nike marketing discourse to women to be a form of commodity feminism, wherein feminism is articulated to femininity to promote product consumption and in ways that produce ironic and troubling disjunctures. Like the "Empathy" and "Dialogue" campaigns, "Goddess" possesses an inward-looking "therapeutic ethos" (Goldman & Papson, 1998, p. 128) in reifying the incorporation of physical activity on one's own terms and celebrating one's uniqueness. Like the "If You Let Me Play" campaign, the female subject position is asserted in an arresting visual manner. In contrast to the other pieces in the "Goddess"campaign, the construction of NIKEGoddess.com contains more inherent contradictions; for example, the invitation to "Look Good. Kick Ass," which asserts that being attractive and empowered are not mutually exclusive. The bold assertion of self that is found in one of the "Goddess" print ads (i.e., "I paint my toenails. I play football") is not even articulated; instead, the user is greeted with a catchy and glib retort (i.e., "Puck off"). On the website, feminism becomes even more articulated to lifestyle. The hard, sweaty physicality, as shown in the "Goddess" TV spot with the boxer, is reduced to images of smiling women in dance-like poses on NIKEgoddess.com. These strategies further reinforce the myth of postfeminism.

The invocation of the Goddess metaphor, with its inherent statement that every woman can be one, is problematic. On the surface, it seems to be a patriarchal challenge, in giving women god-like status. Yet, the idealized goddess that is rendered—young, middle-class, able-bodied, attractive, and thin—reinforces the beauty myth that Nike proclaims it is trying to dismantle. The image of this "Western" goddess juxtaposed against that of a sweatshop worker laboring in an Indonesian Nike factory is, perhaps, the ultimate irony: Whereas Nike is exhorting

Western women to Just Do It, it is telling the Asian women working in its factories to Just Take It.

Goddess worship is invested with a great deal of cultural currency now (e.g., Wiccanism and Xena the Warrior Princess). The new spiritualism on which it is rooted, itself ongoing since the 1960s (e.g., George Harrison and Ravi Shankar), is marked by the influx of Eastern cultural goods and practices in the West, goods that are often commercialized. This commingling of East and West is fully crystallized in Benetton advertising, which articulates a New World Order without racism, and in Madonna's wearing of a Hindu bindi at the 1998 MTV Video Music Awards. NIKEgoddess.com's inclusion of yoga, martial arts, and meditation are also examples. I refer to this articulation of Western ideals (e.g., progress, technology, consumption) to Eastern themes (e.g., serenity, fulfillment, peace, enlightenment) to be a form of "commodity spiritualism," which works to advance a myth of postcolonialism. Commodity spiritualism is problematic on many levels. First, it mystifies the East, especially Asian females. Second, although meditation and yoga can be empowering and life-changing, they are presented as quick, feel-good solutions; they are divorced of their religious and cultural associations. Transcendance that is rooted purely in the mental, and not the physical, seems limiting, in that women's transcendance has historically been stunted (see De Beauvoir, 1952).

Referencing the "Empathy" and "Dialogue" campaigns, Cole and Hribar (1995) wrote that Nike achieved success by "stabilizing identity in a historical moment marked by instability and insecurity" (p. 350), a reactionary moment fueled largely by "backlash" politics (see Faludi, 1991). With the "Goddess" campaign, Nike again is attempting to reposition itself. Although Nike expects its women's business to double in the next few years (Williams, 2001), its position is far from guaranteed, given the increasingly fragmented communications landscape, continuing protests, and a competitive business environment. Reebok, for example, is also developing a new women's campaign and has recently signed tennis star Venus Williams to the largest endorsement deal ever for a female athlete. (Williams, 2001), it is getting harder to cultivate audiences.

Perhaps, Nike's greatest challenge is that of negotiating its own history (i.e., containing the inherent contradictions between its messages and practices). In conducting this analysis, I seek not to go down the road taken by Real (1999) in his analysis of aerobics as commodity exercise, wherein he asserted that aerobics exercise can never be as fully empowering for women as sports are for men. The meaning of cultural goods is determined through a dialectical process between texts, users, and producers. Although Nike's messages are powerful, its audiences play a considerable role in determining their impact. As Ang (1991) forewarns, "One limitation of textual analysis is that it is at the point of exaggerating the poststructural idea of the productivity of the text, leaving the reader as a constructed and rather passive subject formally constituted by the text." As Goldman and Papson (1998) argue, Nike's construction of female gender is a work in progress, therefore, meriting ongoing investigation. It is hoped that future production and reception analyses will be conducted to examine other sites embedded in the "circuit of culture" (Johnson, 1986-1987).

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Appendixes

Table A1

Matrix of NIKEgoddess.com Marketing and Structure

Title	NikeGoddess—Hot products, cool shoes and athletes with Nike style
Target Audience	U.S. women aged 25-34
Agency	Cole & Weber Interactive
Launch Date	February 2001
Theme	What Moves You?
Metatag Description	See the latest in Nike shoes, clothes and gear from women Nike athletes pick. Footwear and apparel for running, cross-training, yoga and more.
Metatag Keywords	Nike, Niketown, Nike shoes, Nike clothes, Nike apparel, Nike footwear, Nike products, Goddess, Goddess store, Goddess magazine, Women sneakers, Nike Shox, Running, Running shoes, Cross train, Cross trainer, Sportswear, Sports bra, Women sports, Womens sportswear, Womens workout, Dri fit, Dry fit, Sports apparel, Air max, Air Pegasus, Womens Running shoes, Women tennis shoe, Cross-training, Hiking shoes, Backpacking, Outdoor gear, Aerobics, Yoga, Yoga pants, Yoga clothes, Marion Jones, Seamless, Seamless apparel, Seamless workout clothes, Primaloft, Wind resistant, Primaloft jacket, Stretch pants, Snowboard clothes, Fleece, Therma Fit, Therma-Fit, Chamois, Backpack jacket, Clima Fit, Heart Rate Monitor, Speed Distance Monitor, Speed Distance, Trail Running, Air Crested Butte, Nike Crested Butte, Air Terra Contego, Nike Contego, Air Cortez, Nike Cortez, Contego, Shox, Woven shoe, Air Shasta, Air Bohemian, Air Pegasus, Running gear, Snowboard jacket, Snowboard sweater, Womens Fitness, Exercise pant, Womens Workout, Tights, Workout gear"
Pages	Products, Try It On, Athletes, Magazine, Shout Out, Register & Sign In

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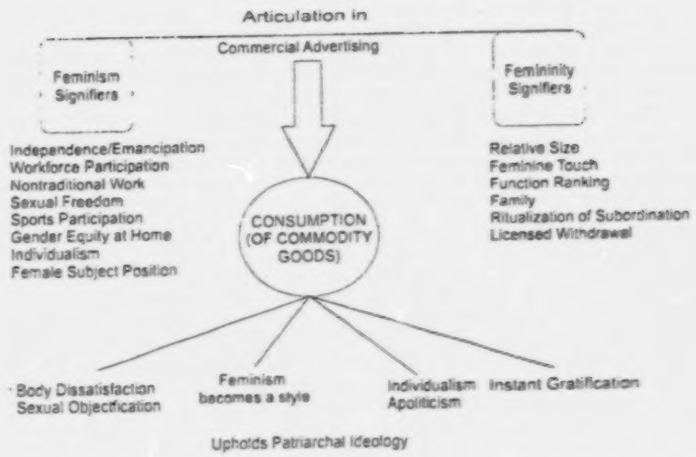
Articulation in
Commercial Advertising
Feminism Signifiers
Femininity Signifiers
Independence/Emancipation
Workforce Participation
Nontraditional Work
Sexual Freedom
Sports Participation
Gender Equity at Home
Individualism
Female Subject Position
CONSUMPTION (OF COMMODITY GOODS)
Relative Size
Feminine Touch
Function Ranking
Family
Ritualization of Subordination
Licensed Withdrawal
Body Dissatisfaction
Sexual Objectification
Feminism becomes a style
Individualism
Apoliticism
Instant Gratification
Upholds Patriarchal Ideology

Figure 1. Conceptual map of commodity feminism. Based on Cole and Hribar (1995), Goffman (1979), and Goldman, Heath, and Smith (1991).

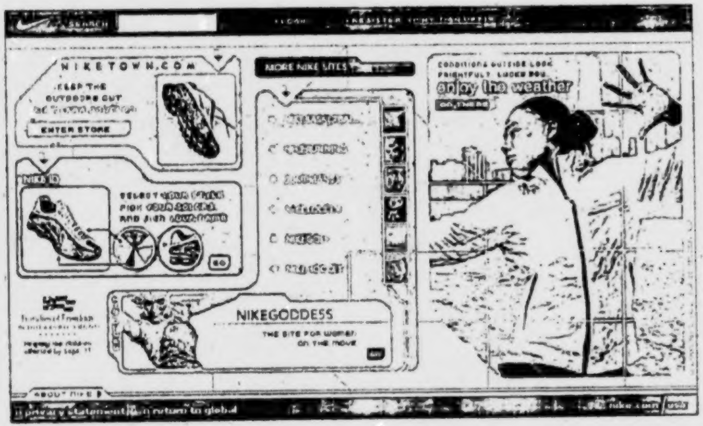
NIKETOWN.COM
ENTER STORE
MORE NIKE SITES
enjoy the weather
NIKEGODDESS
THE SITE FOR WOMEN ON THE MOVE
privacy statement
return to global

Figure 2. NikeUSA main page, February 4, 2002

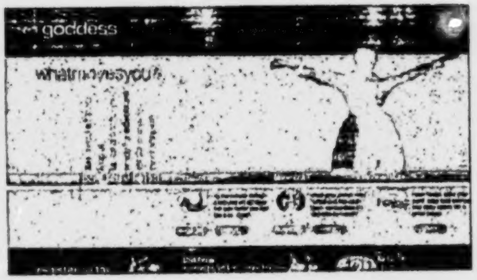
goddess
whatmovesyou?

Figure 3. NIKEgoddess.com main page, 2001. From Harris, K. (2001, June 11). Nikegoddess.com at a hit. Sporting Goods Business, 34(8), 12.

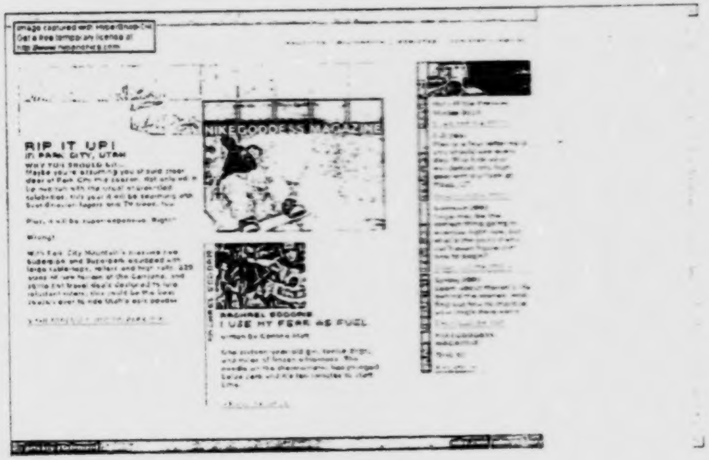
RIP IT UP!
IN PARK CITY, UTAH
NIKEGODDESS MAGAZINE
I USE MY FEAR AS FUEL

Figure 4. NIKEGoddess.com's Magazine page, December 12, 2001

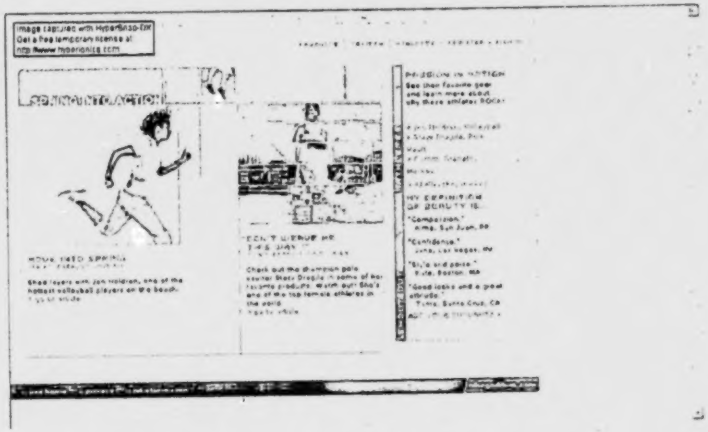
SPRING INTO ACTION
MY DEFINITION OF BEAUTY IS

Figure 5. NIKEGoddess.com's Athletes page, March 12, 2002

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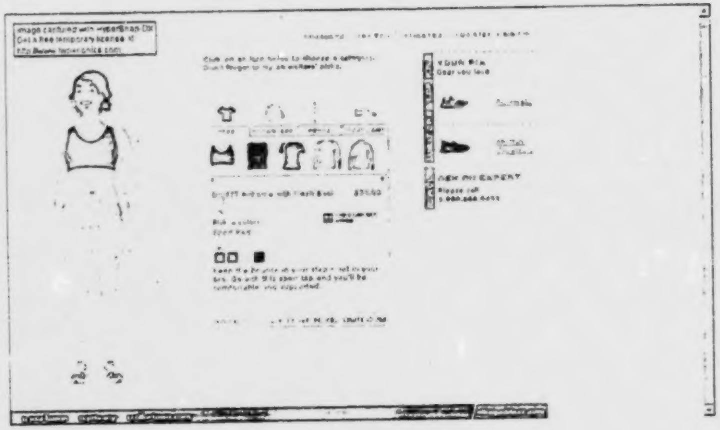
Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com

Figure 6. NIKEGoddess.com's Try It On page, March 12, 2002

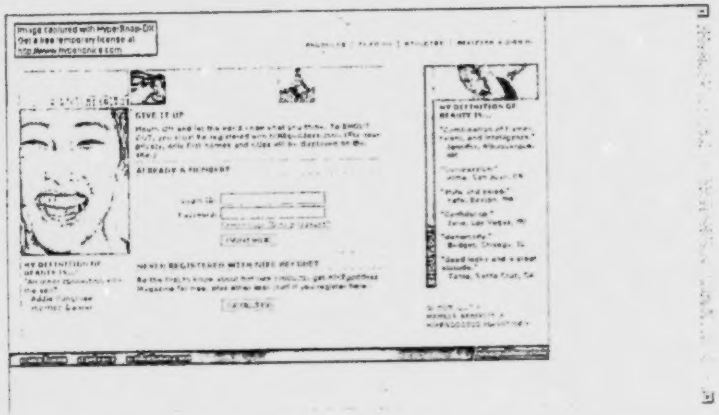
Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
GIVE IT UP
ALREADY A MEMBER?

Figure 7. NIKEGoddess.com's Shout Out page, March 12, 2002

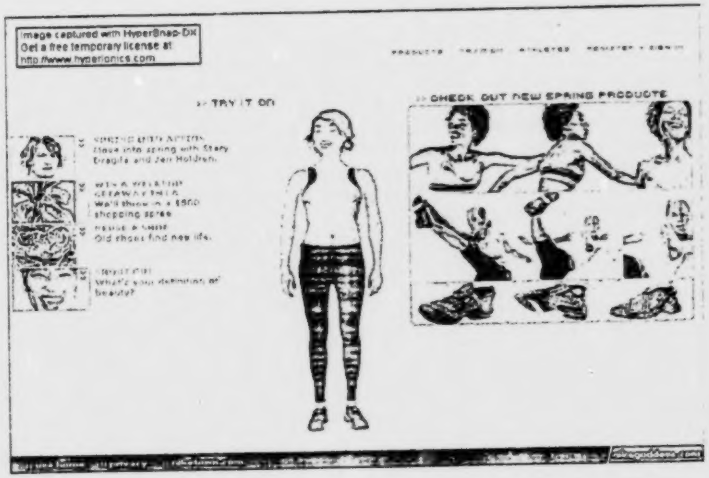
Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
>> TRY IT ON
>> CHECK OUT NEW SPRING PRODUCTS

Move into spring with Stacy Dragila and Jen Holdren.

We'll throw in a $500 shopping spree

Old shoes find new life.

What's your definition of beauty?

Figure 8. NIKEgoddess.com Main Page, March 12, 2002

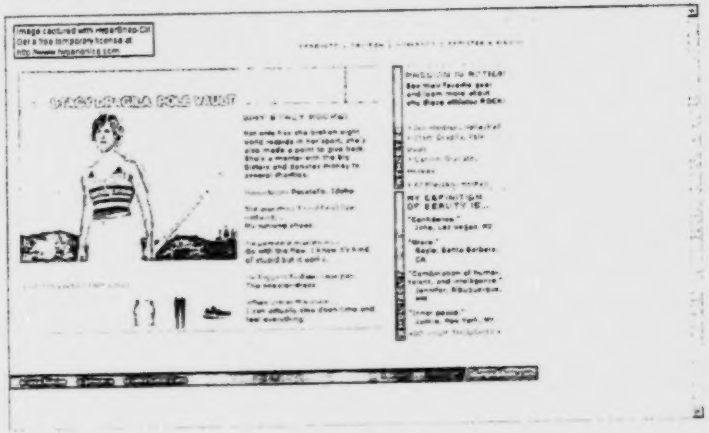
Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
STACY DRAGILA POLE VAULT
MY DEFINITION OF BEAUTY IS...

Figure 9. NIKEGoddess.com's Athletes Interview with Stacy Dragila, March 12, 2002

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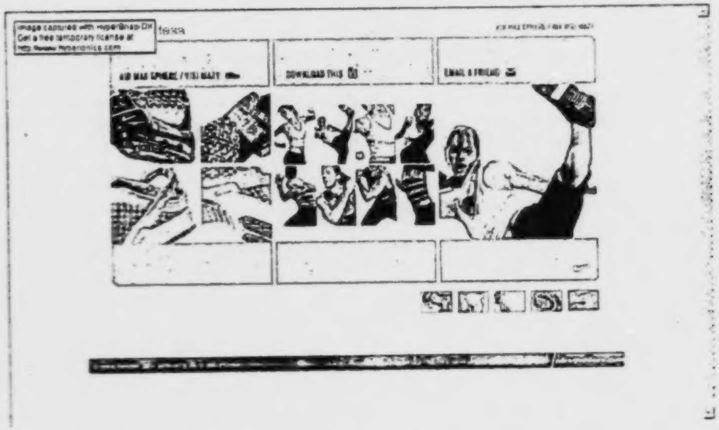
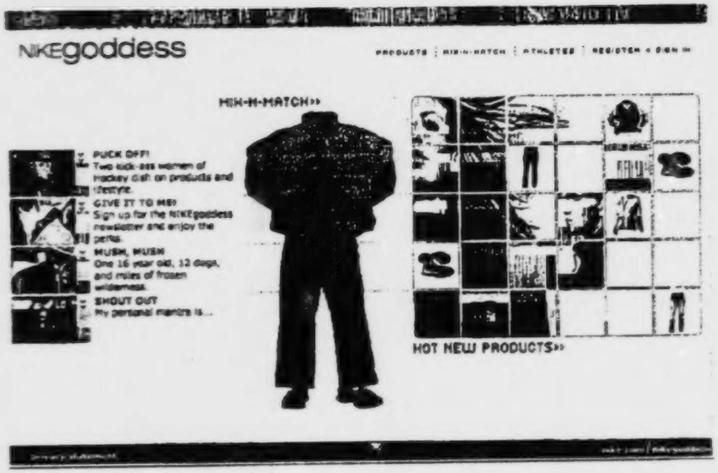


Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
DOWNLOAD THIS
EMAIL A FRIEND

Figure 10. NIKEGoddess.com's Experience the Weave flash page, March 12, 2002


NIKEgoddess
PRODUCTS | MIX-N-MATCH | ATHLETES | REGISTER + SIGN IN
MIX-N-MATCH»
HOT NEW PRODUCTS»

PUCK OFF!
Two kick-ass women of Hockey dish on products and lifestyle.

GIVE IT TO ME!
Sign up for the NIKEgoddess newsletter and enjoy the perks.

MUSH, MUSH
One 16 year old, 12 dogs, and miles of frozen wilderness.

SHOUT OUT
My personal mantra is...

Figure 11. NIKEgoddess.com Main Page, December 12, 2001

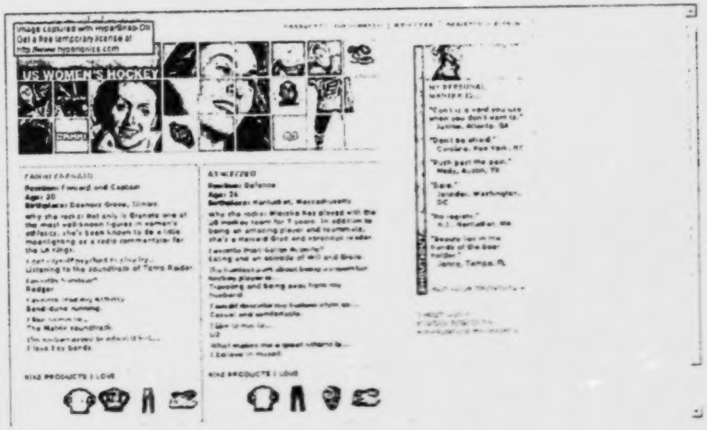


Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
US WOMEN'S HOCKEY
NIKE PRODUCTS I LOVE
NIKE PRODUCTS I LOVE

Figure 12. NIKEGoddess.com's Athletes page, December 12, 2001

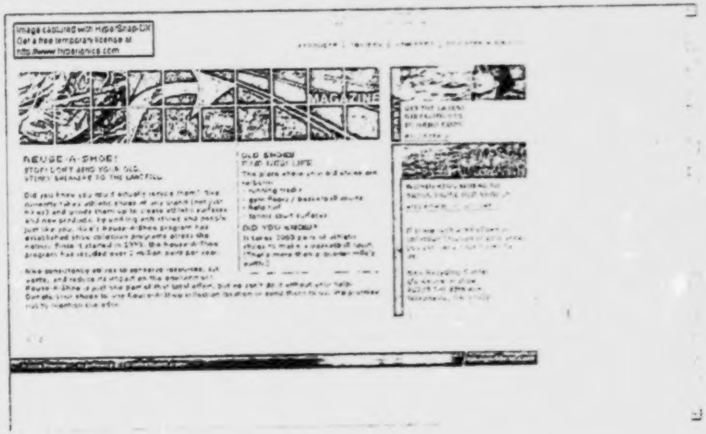


Image captured with HyperSnap-DX
Get a free temporary license at
http://www.hyperionics.com
MAGAZINE
REUSE-A-SHOE!
OLD SHOES

Figure 13. NIKEGoddess.com's Magazine page, March 12, 2002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

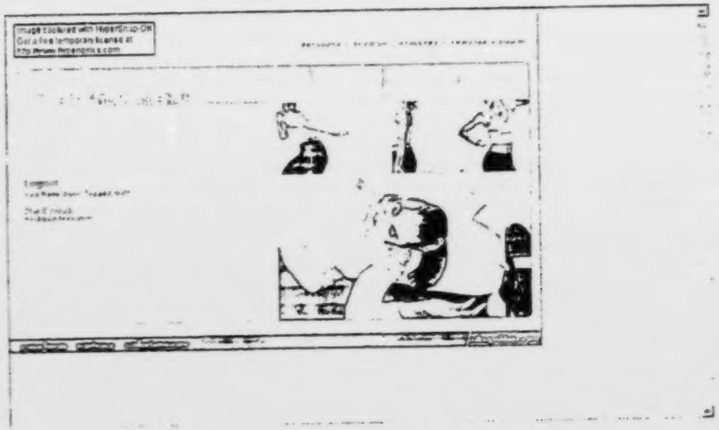


Figure 14. NIKEGoddess.com's Registration and Sign-in page, March 12, 2002

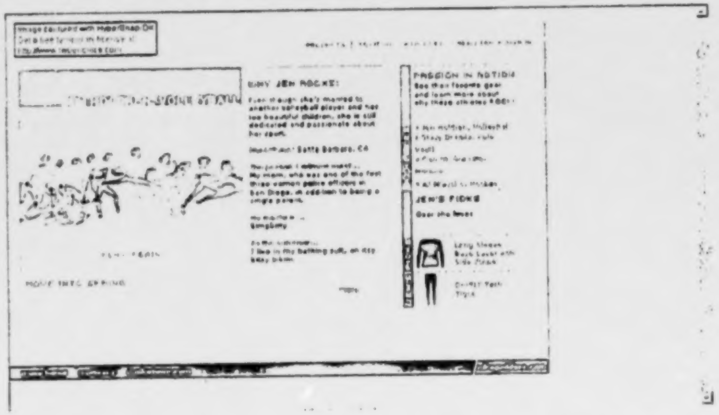


Figure 15. NIKEGoddess.com's Athletes Interview with Jen Holdren, March 12, 2002

Footnotes

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[1] On Nike's corporate timeline, the company lists the following as a milestone: "1991—Women's Print Campaign. Earning unanimous critical and popular praise for its realism, this series of ads establishes Nike's voice of support for women in sports and fitness" ("Marketing Innovation," n.d., para. 7).

[2] According to the American Association of University Women (2001), in 1972, only 2% of college athletes were female, whereas, in 1998, this percent has surged to 39%.

[3] This sentiment embodies more than Nike's marketing objectives and emphasis; it reflects the ideological construction of sports as a male preserve (Bryson, 1987), one where women are of little consequence.

[4] "Since the late 1980s Nike's path of constructing gender differentiation gravitated from a stance that inferred fitness as a gender indifferent activity; to a gender-conscious poetics that advocated therapeutic fitness and well-being; to a fiercely competitive participating in winning and team sports; to let-us-now praise famous women athletes" (Goldman & Papson, 1998, 119).

[5] Cole and Hribar (1995) define postfeminism by comparing it to the second-wave, movement feminism of the 1970s: "While movement feminism generated spaces and identities that interrogated distributional and relational inequalities, meanings, differences, and identities, the postfeminist moment includes spaces that work to homogenize, generate conformity, and mark Others, while discouraging questioning….Postfeminism is also marked by the displacement of potential antagonisms between feminism and consumption through the remaking of feminism into desires and identities that are accomplished through consumption" (p. 356).

[6] The tagline, "Why sport?, is followed by the answer, "You'll live longer."

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[7] Hall (1975) referred to his method as literary, stylistic, and linguistic analysis, against which he compared quantitative content analysis.

[8] See December (1996), Morris and Ogan (1996). and Newhagen and Rafaeli (1996) for a discussion of the unique qualities of Internet technologies as communication forms.

C+CS

Shifting Identities, Creating New Paradigms:

Analyzing the Narratives of Women Online Journalists

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Over the past several years, online journalism studies seem to have become mainstays at communications conferences and in the pages of the most visible journals in the field. Although studies have investigated a wide range of topic areas within online journalism, little has been done to investigate how women in particular have located themselves both organizationally and culturally within this new journalistic paradigm. In the switch from traditional journalism to new media, identities surely have shifted and become renegotiated as journalists adapted to new technological tools and to a new organizational and occupational model.

This paper investigates the experiences of women in online journalism as analyzed through their narratives. It looks at the various patterns that have emerged from their stories and suggests that identity negotiation as a gendered process may shape and color the emerging field of online journalism in profound ways.

ONLINE JOURNALISM

Internet journalism, also known as online journalism, Web journalism, digital news dissemination, cyberjournalism, and even the more generic "new media," can be described through numerous angles. Certain traits will be inherent to the medium itself, For example, the Internet has a sensory appeal that transcends any individual source of media communication, such as television or the newspaper, because it is able to converge so many appeals to the senses on one computer screen (Newhagen & Rafeli, 1996).

This appeal to the senses is only partially produced by the human creating the Web pages. The audience also controls the text on the screen of an Internet media site; the audience determines how it reads, navigates, and understands the text. While the stories may be archived pieces taken directly from the newspaper counterpart, this new reading structure (enabled through hyperlinks to other stories) makes Internet stories non-linear (Newhagen & Rafeli, 1996; Massey and Levy, 1999). News media Web sites publish up-to-the-minute stories supplemented with links to archived stories, databases of information, multimedia, and related Web sites different from their own – the result of which is a massive interconnected information network. Because of this, readers are presented choices through hypermedia, choices contingent on decisions made while interacting with the text (Fredin & Prabu, 1998).

Just like the newspaper or television, the Internet can be viewed as a basic form of mass media (Morris and Ogan, 1996; Roscoe, 1999). Therefore, Internet journalism, as a mass medium, also calls for occupational and organizational definition in addition to the trait-based definition. Who produces and consumes the journalism on the Internet and how they do so are very important considerations in the study of any mass medium.

The organizational tasks of building institutional Web sites that encourage dialogue with the public include obligations to (1) provide general interest information that will be of value to a wide variety of readers, (2) set up the Web site to encourage return visits by continuously updating content, and (3) build easy-to-use sites filled with a great breadth and depth of information that is easy to find (Kent & Taylor, 1998). However, this task may be either enhanced or undermined by the concurrence that the audience (the traditional consumer) often is just as "legitimate" a producer as the journalist (the traditional producer). Internet journalists not only must deal with a new means of news delivery but with a fundamental shift in their role in the communication process (Singer, 1998).

The journalistic work itself is subject to intense change as a result of this fundamental technological change in the news process. For example, journalists have reported feeling "isolated from their audience," either by tradition, choice, or circumstances such as odd working hours (Burgoon, 1987), but the interactivity sometimes present in new media may thwart this isolation (Singer, 1998). Moreover, it questions the autonomous nature of the journalistic craft as asserted by researchers dating back to the 1950s (Breed, 1955). With the Internet, Singer said, journalists "have at their fingertips every influential news organization not just in the nation but on the planet" – an access that might identifiably influence the way they practice journalism (Singer, 1998).

In addition, in moderated "chats" (a "question and answer" session between readers and a source, usually moderated and edited by a staff member) that are a hallmark of the top-rated Internet journalism publications, the journalist's job is inherently changed as he or she becomes a moderator between source and reader. Instead of taking the traditional interpretive role between the two, the journalist allows the source to respond directly to the reader (Young, 1998). Such interactivity is only one example of the way the production, construction, and dissemination of news and information may change for Internet journalists. While the journalist works autonomously in many ways in producing the news, he or she also may interact more directly with readers or work in the moderator's role. Each of these roles enacted by the online journalist may require a more heightened sense of personal responsibility for the final product than in more traditional media.

GENDER AND IDENTITY IN ONLINE JOURNALISM

According to the U.S. Census data collected in 2000, women fill close to half of all professional positions in the workplace. This marks a gradual shift from lower-paying and part-time employment roles traditionally inhabited by women, and the outcome may produce different gender relationships both in the workplaces and in society at large (Walby, 1997). Coppack et al. (1995) noted the contradictions hidden in the "post-feminist" notion that women have "made it" in terms of juggling career, marriage, motherhood – even though the juggling of these often proposes more struggle in maintaining a successful career.

Specifically in the newsroom, women journalists made up 37 percent of the editorial staffs (Weaver & Wilhoit, 1996; Voakes, 1997) in newspapers nationwide several years ago, though no recent statistics were available on the number of women currently working for online editorial publications. Studies have shown women journalists often are walking a fine line between embracing what van Zoonen (1998) refers to as a feminine news identity, which primarily entails a stronger identification with the audience, and falling in as "one of the boys," which entails fitting in with the status quo system of presenting the facts with less regard for the reader – as well as falling in with institutional newsroom norms (van Zoonen, 1998). The result is an identity that is fragmented on many levels.

By its very nature, gender is arguably fluid and shifting (Butler, 1990) and a continual "product of historically specific practices of social regulation" (Henriques et al., 1984, p. 12), The "experience of a gendered... cultural identity is considered an achievement" and gender identity figures prominently into person's daily lives in terms of both work and play as a performance and achievement (Butler, 1990). Identity, to put it simply, is a meaning a person attributes to him or herself (or othrs attribute to that person) as demonstrated by the position they occupy in society. Each person uses a number of identities that are linked to his or her "role relationships" and as that person functions in society (Burke, 1980; McCall and Simmons, 1966; Stryker, 1968). Hall explains that this identity is shifting and often fragmented and "constantly in the process of change and transformation;" it is never a complete process (Hall, 1990, p. 4).

Moreover, identity is constantly up for negotiation. There is always a characteristic of an identity that must be left out from a person's "whole" identity, and because it is left out, it tends to weaken the prevailing identities and use them to construct an "other" – or a concept and opinion of what the "self" is not (Hall, 1990, p. 4). This "other" can be used to locate oneself within the power structure of society and institutions – in terms of taking on that "other" persona in order to function within a certain societal or institutional discourse or rejecting that "other." Consciously or subconsciously, people use the "other" to distinguish their identities in this manner (Castells, 1997). Walker (2001) suggests that through identity construction young women might construct their identities as "one of the boys" but "this identification will not dissolve gendered differences or obliterate male social power, although it may well work to obscure such power and its effects" (Walker, 2001).

Gender is key to any analysis of identity in a study such as this one because gender is not just another variable in a study, but according to McCall, a "type of embodied cultural capital" (McCall, 1992). McCall says certain forms of capital "have gendered meanings because they are given form by gendered dispositions" (McCall, 1992, p. 842). Moreover, the gendered dispositions are also forms of capital though they are rarely recognized as holding the same value as economic or cultural capital and therefore, gendered dispositions are often seen as less than legitimate (Bourdieu, 1973, p. 245). A study of women's identity as practiced in the workplace in terms of gender is vital because "[w]omen internalize [the binary] opposition itself, rather than one side of the opposition, for they are mediating between at least two domains: the masculine/public world of paid work and the feminine/personal world of human reproduction, encountering patriarchal relations in both" (McCall, 1992, p. 848).

NARRATIVE ANALYSIS

Often, some extremely telling data can be culled through narrative analysis – the interpretation of peoples' stories in an effort to seek patterns or general truths. This study uses narrative analysis to focus on how women conceptualize identity in terms of their careers in online journalism, and it was chosen to focus on the storied nature of their experiences. In his "Introduction to the structural analysis of narrative," Barthes (1977) claims that the narrative form has a structure and appeal that is universal and found throughout history in cultures and literary genres: "It is simply there, like life itself" (Barthes, 1977, p. 79). Narratives function as a small part of a full ethnographic analysis and may function as an integral part to feminist research (Bell, 1993). Through narratives, women give meaning to their lives and construct themselves through them; narratives are crucial to shaping personal and social identity and crucial to understanding and constructing the identities of others (McLaren, 1993).

Walker (2001) says all narratives are constructed discursively through the common "gender scripts" so that identities and processes of identification occur within the social networks and power relations that are most familiar in society (Walker, 2001; Munro, 1998). Munro claims studying narratives might "highlight gendered constructions of power, resistance and agency" (1998, p. 7) – particularly shedding light upon the social relations that create and maintain gendered norms and power structures. Moreover, narratives have proven effective in gender communication research in large part because women's (and men's, for that matter) stories are often filled with latent meanings (Clair, 1993; Taylor & Conrad, 1992). Although narratives may be polysemic and their interpretation overly subjective for some critics, studies such as these also lend themselves well to exploratory research because they do not force topics of conversation. Rather, they allow the subjects to speak at will and allow patterns to manifest themselves without glossing over the complexity of identity and gender in terms of work.

RESEARCH METHODS

For the study, 15 women online journalists were chosen, and only 13 (for logistic or time reasons) were able to complete interviews. All but one currently or previously worked in full-time positions at online publications that were Internet counterparts of newspapers and television stations.[1] The one exception worked for one of the largest service and content providers in existence in the late 1980s to middle 1990s. The women ranged in age from 22 to 45, and although most were Caucasian, one was Asian-American, one Indian-American, and one African-American. They represented positions from entry-level to vice-president, though the majority held positions that would be considered "middle" range management. All had either a journalism degree or extensive experience in journalism (even the 22-year-old had been an intern at a major online newspaper for six years before accepting a full-time online journalism job elsewhere).

Each subject was interviewed over email, telephone or a combination of both (the choice was hers) and offered a series of questions asking about their job, position, typical or unusual days at work, general attitudes about online journalism as an occupation and about their organization, and others. Questions were catered toward each individual and conversations – while sticking to a relatively standard format – were allowed to evolve naturally. The method chosen does tend to allow for cultural ambiguities that may crop up, and it allows the researcher to make sense of these ambiguities by discerning patterns and themes within the narratives (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993).

---

[1] Having worked in online journalism as both a full-time editor and part-time freelancer, the author of the piece knew several of the women personally. Others were introduced through mutual acquaintances or referred by the subjects themselves.

Throughout the conversations, recurring themes of identity became apparent, mainly dealing with why the women moved into new media, why they enjoyed or did not enjoy their work, and how gender and identity might have affected their position within the institutional structures within which they located themselves.

These themes included a sense that: 1) online journalism might be an opportunity to increase cultural capital – and in turn, advance in their careers -- in a way that seemed less available in "traditional" media, 2) online journalism would be an opportunity to take on an entrepreneurial role – a role that in the news industry development was historically dominated by men, 3) learning new technology was an opportunity for empowerment, 4) online journalism afforded them the opportunity to create a better organizational paradigm with fewer discrepancies among genders and ethnicities, and 5) it gave them a perceived (and often false) notion that because of the supposed ease of technology and the possibility of telecommuting, there would be more opportunity to shift more easily among identities – often including the gendered identity of mother or wife.

INCREASED CULTURAL CAPITAL WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION

Although all women journalists have entirely different stories to tell about their personal experiences and very diverse notions of how their at-work identity is constructed, one theme has pervaded through much literature on women working in journalism throughout U.S. and British history: That women are engaged in constant struggle to be treated as professional in the newsroom (Steiner, 1998). Steiner views this issue as a historical paradox: "Women who refused to be specifically feminine at work were treated as deviant, while women who allowed themselves to be treated as feminine were marginalized. Thus, the most unyielding barrier to success – and otherwise women's terms for success were not unlike men's – was men's power to position them as female" (Steiner, 1998, p. 150). Whether their decision was consciously related to feeling powerless as a result of gender, it seems many women online journalists were attempting to leave behind this institutionalized patriarchy when leaving traditional newsrooms. Using McCall's framework for gender as a marginalized cultural capital, the women interviewed expressed a sense that moving into a "new" realm would increase their cultural capital and in turn, afford them opportunity for advancement and increased respect among colleagues.

Karen*[2] worked for CNN Interactive for more than four years before deciding to leave and work as a dot com freelancer and gardener. Although she had worked producing programs for the television counterpart and as a public information worker for her first two years at CNN, she viewed the move to new media as an opportunity to carve a niche for herself within the organization. Since there was little newsroom interest in the online publication at the time, she was able to move up through the ranks into an editor position perhaps more quickly than she would have in the traditional operation, she said.

"If you showed any aptitude at all for the technology at that time, you could get promoted," Karen said. "It was not like being in a regular newsroom where you might be at the same desk for years and years."

Sheila, formerly a reporter for The Philadephia Inquirer and Savannah News Press, has worked since 1996 in new media at The Chronicle of Higher Education – first writing the daily news briefs and then moving to a more technical position that involves producing, coordinating and publishing all kinds of content on the site. She entered new media seeing a clearer path for educational and career advancement.

"New media offered challenging new opportunities that the newsroom here did not, and there was clear room for advancement," Sheila said. "This was not the case in the editorial section of the paper."

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[2] The names and primary identifying characteristics of all of the women have been changed.

The idea that new media presented better career advancement opportunities is echoed by most of the women in the study, especially those who began in the early stages of online journalism and launched new media publications in 1995 or earlier. Georgia, a former reporter for The Detroit Free Press, The Charlotte Observer, and The Washington Post realized it might be years before she could advance to the editor level of a major national newspaper, but when she heard The Washington Post was seeking editors for its online publication in 1995, even though she had no previous aspirations to move into digital media, she leaped at the opportunity. She advanced up through the organizational hierarchy to the position of senior editor and left in 1999 to an executive level position at a media Web site affiliate with a popular music-related cable television network and one of the largest media companies in the country.

"(When I started, I recognized) it was new and exciting, and the line for advancement was much shorter," Georgia said.

With a new position and a better title, Georgia felt she was given more respect. Although her colleagues in the traditional newsroom were "suspicious" of the new medium being journalism, they were impressed that her title was editor. Other women in the study (Karen and Sarah, notably) made similar remarks about having to constantly explain their new career directions to former colleagues, but they still felt the career opportunity was better in online media. They felt like they held more clout institutionally, and therefore, their cultural capital was increased.

ENTREPRENEURS AND PIONEERS

In the narratives, there was an easily detectable pattern of women considering their roles as online journalists "pioneering." By constructing an identity using the idea of a pioneer or an entrepreneur, women were positioning themselves outside of the traditional gendered notion of women being stuck in the lower echelons of corporate culture and content to be there. In fact, these women position themselves at odds with the traditional corporate culture; they note an interest in moving to a new and different realm. In their narratives, each projected an image as career-driven, ambitious, task-oriented, and motivated. As suggested by Kanter and her studies, this suggests the importance of reinterpreting previous data on sex differences in work behavior: "The structure of opportunity reinforces typically 'male' and 'female' work patterns which in essence are neither male or female, but opportunity-related." In other words, because women in the new media women positioned themselves in identities that would allow them to be career-driven and ambitious, they felt as if they could take on "traditionally-male" characteristics of ambition and motivation in their at-work identities (Kanter, 1977). Because it is an entirely new occupation with an entirely new organizational structure (albeit within an old career, journalism), women are finally given the opportunity to express their motivation and truly seek quick career advancement in ways that were not as readily available in traditional journalism.

"I saw it as an opportunity to shape a new medium and I have," said Georgia.

Moreover, various women felt limited by or even disgruntled with the old medium. Sarah, now a college professor who specializes in research and education in Internet journalism, originally left her suburban newspaper to coordinate digital editorial content (pre-World Wide Web) for a large Internet service and content provider in 1982.

"(Digital media) was a chance to be creative, to take an idea and bring it to life, to do something no one else was doing...to be, at that time, a pioneer," Sarah said. "And, as I said, as things have turned out, it was a real career advantage.

Karen echoes this sentiment, characterizing her early work as "groundbreaking."

"I didn't mind working the crazy hours that I was in the beginning because we were groundbreakers," Karen said. "It was exciting."

Rachel, who began working at one of the best known online newspaper sites in the country seven years ago, said she continues to work long hours as the site's executive "producer. At the start, the long hours were her attempt to narrow a learning curve on technology, but now, they have more to do with the challenge of remaining the "best" news publication on the Web.

"What I liked about the idea of trying new media was that inherently it was new," Rachel said. "Its newness presented journalistic and intellectual challenges, which I thought would be tinged with technology. I found out rather swiftly that the technology, at least in the early stages of this medium, play a huge part in how to perform journalism."

In addition to taking on the roles of entrepreneur and pioneer, the women in this study also repeatedly identified themselves as *gatekeepers*, the theoretical term used to describe the process of how the media filters certain messages out of its publications and broadcasts as the public sees them as a result of the decisions of an editor or multitude of decision-makers (Shoemaker, 1996). This particular responsibility never seemed so articulated in past studies of online journalists as it does with the women in this study.

"The ability to correct any wrong information instantaneously is something traditional media – newspaper, television and even to a certain extent, radio – have not been able to do," said Josephine, who worked as the first Internet-only reporter for one of the largest online television news sites for 10 months until she was laid off in February 2001.

Michelle agreed and explained the Internet publication editors felt they had to be even more critical than print or broadcast media editors because their journalistic integrity was called into question simply because they were on the Web – a medium used mainly for gossip-columnists posing as journalists. (Matt Drudge, who produces the gossipy *Drudge Report*, was mentioned by two of the women as an example of poor online journalism.)

"One of the main advantages to being online was that if a mistake made it up online, we could instantly republish it and the mistake would be gone," said Michelle, assistant managing editor of Britannica.com since 1999[3] and formerly a reporter for The Chicago Tribune and other smaller newspapers. "Another was the strenuous editing process Britannica used; articles went through three editors and fact-checking before going through two copy editors."

New media has allowed the women online journalists to move beyond the boundaries of their traditional roles as editors of newspapers with already-established column guides and section headings. The women often mentioned the opportunity to change the way a publication was created, designed and delivered.

"Internet journalism is very flexible," said Georgia. "If something does not work, it is easier to change it – for example, lose a column for a section. The flexibility allows its practitioners to try many new ways of telling the story – through interactivity, Flash movies, message boards, or whatever else."

Identifying as a pioneer or an entrepreneur is significant in gender terms for obvious reasons. Historically, women were rarely allowed the opportunity to be pioneers – especially in white collar realms – and even if they were present in the boardroom (or in this case, the editors' meetings), they were rarely given the opportunity to make decisions that affected the fate of the organization (Kanter, 1993). One of the last times women were allowed to work as ground-breakers and innovators was at a time when the men were gone – during World War II, and this was relatively short-lived (Hennig & Jardim, 1977). Some scholars point to women taking on "masculine" characteristics in order to succeed (Kanter, 1977; Hennig & Jardim, 1977; Wilkenson, 1993), but the women in the study do not acknowledge any construction of a masculine identity and in their narratives, they do not suggest it may be a subconscious process. Rather, there is a pattern of increased responsibility leading to an increased sense of importance about the work they are doing. The identity is not gendered, but rather steeped in both organizational and personal responsibility (especially as suggested by journalists' perceived gatekeeping role) for an important industry.

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[3] Michelle was recently laid off from Brittanica.com and now is a stay-at-home mom and freelance writer.

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

While none of the women interviewed had previous "technical" experience when they worked in traditional journalism or when they trained for journalism in college, each expressed a sense of empowerment for having learned HTML and other Web programming codes, software programs and electronic publishing devices. Not only did the added skills bolster their resumes, but they gave the women a sense of personal satisfaction. Technical skills are traditionally linked to masculinity (Creese, 1999; Walker, 2001), but the women online journalists in this study were able to hone new skills and construct a new, empowered identity through the process.

"I liked being 'tech savvy' and working in a department where just about everyone was under 30," Sheila said.

"In the very beginning especially, it was very free and they were very flexible. We were allowed to be very creative," Karen said of her first years with CNN Interactive. "It was great that I could learn so many neat applications and types of software -- it was always interesting and I was constantly learning."

Maya, a content developer at a major portal site for several California Bay area publications, said she had not been encouraged to pick up technology skills in college even though she just graduated in 2000. This is of note, since most of the women in the study graduated from college before 1995 and therefore before the time when journalism (and many other liberal arts) schools emphasized and encouraged learning technological skills that might bolster their reporting or production acumen. Maya learned all of her skills on-the-job at her internships at a large online newspaper and continues to learn now in her daily work experiences.

"Learning technology in terms of computers, software and hardware has been the chief advantage of this job," Maya said. "I'm sure people thought that I was always very well-versed in computers and technology, but I was not."

Despite the women's actual technological skill set, they shared a feeling of confidence that they were able to demonstrate their competency to coworkers. The knowledge seemed to produce a tremendous sense of self-satisfaction, which is a well-documented phenomenon in research on human-computer interaction as well as in specifically gender-oriented studies of women and technology (Stuart & Ogan, 1989). In fact, feminist scholars specifically cite women as natural innovators and consumers of technology because of its ability to empower, an idea that directly opposes the notion that men are more strongly linked to technology and techno-fetishism (Haraway, 1991).

CREATING A NEW ORGANIZATIONAL PARADIGM OR REFRAMING AN OLD ONE?

A majority of the women interviewed shared their hopes that new media organizations would be inherently more friendly to women through a more collaborative environment. As members of the new organizations, they said they were free of the constraints of history and the way traditional media organizations were set up to work and empowered to create their own environment. When new media organizations were first set up in the mid-90s, this was the case, they said. Unfortunately, as the traditional journalists and journalism managers found the Web to be a more "legitimate" medium for journalism, they forged their way in – coopting the new media into their traditional experience and essentially, enforcing a more rigidly traditional organizational standards and hierarchies. While a number of the women expressed dismay at the change, most insisted the online newsrooms were still more creative, collaborative work environments than traditional newsrooms.

"I thought that perhaps this new medium would afford the opportunity to build a staff that was truly diverse and reflective of society. *Nyet*," said Rachel. "I've found the male-female ratio to be very similar to most newspaper newsrooms, and in fact, within (the) editorial (department) here, the group representing section chiefs and senior managers comprises 16 men and 6 women -- with the sole person of color being a woman."

Although the majority of the original staff to launch CNN Interactive were women, Karen said the ratio evened out after some time. More distressing to her was the hiring of old-line professionals to manage the existing staff.

"There was the disadvantage that after awhile, (CNN Interactive) would hire these … managers because they had previously managed something or someone – not a Web site. That's a real problem," Karen said. "They didn't know anything about what it took to produce a story for the Web and would ask for the impossible – for us to do everything ourselves and to do things that just were not possible with the resources they provided for us."

However, Karen and others said the spirit of collaboration [inherently a "feminine" characteristic of organizations (Kanter, 1977)] has made the new media preferable to traditional media newsrooms for many of them. Patricia, also a former editor at CNN Interactive, agreed. Currently, in a middle management position of project manager at the company, she said the online environment is far less hostile than her former newsroom.

"When I worked at the newsroom of CNN, people were constantly yelling at each other," said Patricia. "I have a theory that because the television personalities were largely visible, there was more of an ego element involved. In online, we often don't even put bylines on our stories. We all work together to publish something, so there is less of that ego-driven criticism and hostility."

Rachel expressed a similar sentiment to the CNN editors.

"We have polished a very collaborative project model in which we develop products in teams. My skills as a diplomat with an open editorial mind are applauded by my colleagues within the business development teams," she said.

More interesting, perhaps, were the word choices the women used in describing their roles within the online newsroom. Often, the words were those associated with traditionally masculine gendered roles ("leader," "defender," "team-builder," mentor") and masculine terminology – often drawing from sports or male-dominated professions ("clean-up hitter," "coach," "traffic cop"). However, the women often combined these terms with more feminine roles and terms. While none of them chose "mother hen" or "queen bee" – and one woman even admitted to purposely avoiding such a role within the newsroom – this has been a term women managers of the past have used to describe themselves within an organization (Hennig and Jardim, 1977). Among the women online journalists interviewed, the role of the nagging female matron was replaced by other "feminine" (yet effective) roles including "humanitarian," "mother," "facilitator," "listening post," "arbitrator," "big sister," and "cheerleader" – though these were all inevitably paired with another "masculine" termed role ("ax-wielder," "traffic cop, etc.). It seems many of the women in this study do ascribe to certain traditionally male-characteristics (including the love for technology and a risk-taking or opportunistic spirit), but unlike women in Hennig and Jardim's "The Managerial Woman," they embrace feminine gendered characteristics as positive organizational attributes. They do not seem to shun these feminine aspects in the construction of their at-work identity in the online newsroom.

By stepping outside the "male-oriented definitions of 'professionalism'" and arguing that "many 'female' qualities can contribute to both an individual's performance and organization's effectiveness," (Wood & Conrad, 1983) the women are in essence reframing their identities as "acceptable" in terms of being effective journalists. In doing so they are also reframing the culture of the traditional newsroom by recreating an atmosphere more conducive and receptive to their at-work identities. The women did so in their narratives by not only using both masculine and feminine language to describe themselves, but by characterizing their organizations as empowering and collaborative when in fact (judging from anecdotes in the narratives), these claims were somewhat exaggerated. However, in framing the environment to better coincide with where the women used their constructed identities to locate themselves within that environment, a more positive picture emerged. Reframing allows for a better understanding of how identity can subconsciously shift in order to better maintain a sense of empowerment within a workplace (Buzzanell, 1995). In considering Jameson's notion of "the political unconscious," it is intriguing to imagine reframing as a device to construct a cultural text that is acceptable in the minds of the women interviewed (specifically, the idea that their new situation might be as bad as their old one). Jameson's idea that "the construction of the bourgeois subject in emergent capitalism and its schizophrenic disintegration in our own time" seems especially applicable if you consider how the women online journalists construct themselves as resistant to an unacceptable traditional environment even though they are situated in a new one that may be as oppressive as it is progressive (Jameson, 1981, p. 9).

Jennifer, a former online reporter who was Sheila's predecessor at The Chronicle, ultimately left new media for public relations. Offering a flipside to the stories, Jennifer herself had experienced feelings of "isolation," she said, not so much because she was surrounded by men in her work, but because she was surrounded by men who were interested primarily in technical intricacies and "the culture of the computer geek." This was not a culture in which she was comfortable participating, she said. However, her boss, a woman director of the online operation and senior manager within the company, sought to maintain an inclusive atmosphere for the employees nonetheless.

"(Our boss) was very motherly to all of us and recognized that we were trying to accomplish a Herculean task with little support or direction and with pretty much all of us in our first post-college jobs," Jennifer said. "She did little things like have pizza parties or arrange for (the publication's name on) coffee mugs for all of us on the day we launched. This is probably biased of me, but I just don't think a man in that role would have thought of things like that. It seems trivial, but it really helped to have someone so highly placed in the hierarchy go out of her way to recognize how hard we all were working."

This type of collaborative environment -- as reflected in language, rituals, and styles of communication -- create an organizational culture that most of the women in the study believe is necessary for the success of an online journalism organization (Kanter, 1977). Much of this hinges on a more feminine gendered approach.

SHIFTING IDENTITIES

A number of the women also identified themselves as mothers, wives, students, writers, and other roles un-related to their roles as online journalists. Several of them admitted part of the temptation to move into new media from traditional media centered on the idea that they might be able to telecommute to work. While none of the women interviewed had been able to do so on a regular basis, each expressed an intrigue with the idea that she could shift identities – career woman to mother, for example – so easily. Moreover, there was a sense of exhaustion among a number of them, attributed sometimes to the fact that they are constantly attempting to reframe a world (a new media newsroom) that is swiftly being drawn into a current of tradition. In addition, a number of the women expressed weariness from the quick pace of news, long hours, and constant adaptation (to new technology, new designs, etc.). Despite this, most recommended a career in online journalism for other women.

"Online or off, it's a terrific career for women," said Rachel. "I believe women are often very compassionate reporters and editors, whose egos don't get in the way as much as with men. I think women who are comfortable with change and technology can star in this field. Male or female, I'd tell a new graduate to just be ready to deal with uncertainty and constant evolution. If they have a stomach for chaos, they'll be fine."

Also common was a refusal to acknowledge the career might be affected at all by any issues of gender.

"There are no gender issues for a woman journalists in new media other than the standards ones in media in general. Women make up more than 50 percent of Web users and I think women have been instrumental in developing the Web and have done some great sites. The best community sites are either women's sites (women.com and Oxygen) or women-dominated (The Well, WebMD, Blackplanet.com)," Georgia said.

"(This is a good career for a woman) because a woman can do anything and a computer does not discriminate," said Maya. However, she concurred she might have this viewpoint because her department is 70 percent female and because she is allowed to be very autonomous in her own work.

Despite the prevailing idea among the women studied that the Internet is a "feminine" medium, most had misgivings about *actual* opportunity for women within the online journalism medium.

"One thing I've noticed is that the lower-paid crap work kinds of jobs (like coding or production work that's the same every week) tend to go to women," Sheila said.
"The people making the real money, and the ones with the hard-core computer skills, are usually men. These include programmers, our art director, our database administrator, and our director of new media. Women in our department tend to do production work, editorial assistant-type work, and writing and editing for our career network (a less prestigious section of the publication)."

While women may shift their identities as they forge a vertical path in the online newsroom, and while they may reframe their environment to feel more empowered within that newsroom, it would seem from Sheila and others' comments that the glass ceiling is as much at work in the online newsroom as it was perceived to be in the traditional newsroom.

CONCLUSION

The women online journalists provided stories that suggested particular patterns and themes throughout the paper; in summary, a number of them left traditional media to pursue online journalism because it seemed like a swifter path for career advancement and an opportunity to increase their cultural capital. Second, entering a new field allowed them to identify as entrepreneurs and pioneers – roles that were not available to women throughout history. Third, the women felt empowered learning about a new technology and creating media by using that technology. Fourth, the women felt that in creating a new medium they might also have the opportunity to create an entirely new workplace paradigm that was friendlier to women and other minorities. Finally, the women saw an opportunity to negotiate other gender roles in the idea that their position could be performed from home. The last two themes were often disputed by the reality that the online newsroom was often as patriarchal and inflexible as the traditional newsroom, but the women interviewed often reframed their environments to make the reality seem more acceptable.

Connecting to the field of online journalism, the women in the study demonstrated a firm grasp of the autonomous nature of their positions in the online newsroom. In their narratives, they were constantly aware that they were responsible in the creation of a new mass medium, and they were aware of what their competition publications were doing. Organizationally, the women fulfilled the primary duties of Internet journalists as defined by Kent and Taylor (1998), but their perceptions of the roles that were not in their job descriptions were constantly at the forefront of the discussion. For example, a number of women implied they considered themselves responsible in large part for the cultural climate of their newsroom and in the relational dynamics among coworkers. They also considered themselves responsible for creating an entirely new paradigm in terms of a news organization and a news medium.

This is in large part connected with their identity negotiation, which the narratives demonstrated was constantly being constructed in their existence as "pioneers" of a new medium. While they must sometimes position themselves as "cheerleader," they must also position themselves as "entrepreneur." Much of this shifting among identities is certainly common in other occupations and even in other media-related careers (van Zoonen, 1998), it would seem the shifting must take place at a much more rapid pace than in past careers, perhaps in accordance with the swiftly changing technological plane. The women in the study have also demonstrated in the patterns of their narratives a tendency to use the "other" that Hall described as an ungendered type of being that exists in a world uncomplicated by gender differences. In most of their narratives, they position themselves as technologically-savvy women, good and strong journalists, who are inherently immune to this (Hall, 1990, p. 4). While it seems they do not necessarily use that "other" to locate themselves within the power structure of the newsroom or even in journalism, they do tend to reframe their situations in order to accommodate their own constructions of self. They reframe the online newsroom as a tabula rasa in which they can create a new organizational paradigm that does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, or class. Anecdotally, this does not seem to be the case, but the optimism persists. While the women interviewed hardly consider themselves "one of the boys," there is a sense of equality among them. As Walker warns, "this identification will not dissolve gendered differences or obliterate male social power, although it may well work to obscure such power and its effects" (Walker, 2001). Perhaps the obscuring of power is what has taken place in the online newsroom of these particular women.

However, their constructions of identity are often conceptualized with powerful terms (entrepreneur, pioneer, arbitrator), and their quest for technical knowledge and skill may be increasing their level of cultural capital – perhaps obscuring gender somewhat, as the women themselves seem to attest. If McCall's theory that women internalize many notions of patriarchy within society is true (McCall, 1992), then it would seem these women are bucking the norm and perhaps creating a new reality in the process. Perhaps their construction of identities in a completely new journalistic paradigm truly will manifest itself in a changed, more diverse, more collaborative environment.

APPENDIX

The following questions were used as a starting point in the conversations with the women interviewed. Depending on the women's positions and current employment status, the questions varied somewhat. These conversations often veered from the questions as the interviewer responded to the women's answers, and much more data was culled from these interviews than was used in this paper.

1. How long have you worked in online journalism and what have been your main responsibilities? What is your title (or what was your most recent title)?

2. How long have you worked in new media?

3. Is your degree in journalism?

4. Did you work in traditional media previously? What was your position? At what types of media (broadcast, newspaper, etc.)?

5. Why did you choose to move to new media?

6. What are some of the advantages you've found in working in Internet journalism (if any)?

7. What are some disadvantages (if any)?

8. In your organization, describe your interactions with colleagues on work-related projects. How is the work divided? How are divisions of power articulated (if they are evident at all)?

9. In the newsroom/editorial department, how do you describe any "role" you play in terms of both personality and responsibility?

10. How many people does your organization employ? How many are in your department?

11. How many women work in your organization? In your department? An estimate is fine.

12. When you are producing a story/graphic/feature for the Web, what are the primary things you keep in mind to ensure its success with readers?

13. When you first told people you know that you were going to work online, what kind of reactions did you get?

14. Do you consider this a good career for a woman journalist? Why or why not? Are there any gender-specific considerations that you've found?

15. What might you tell a recent female graduate thinking about going into online journalism?

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"Deviance" & Discourse:
How Readers Respond to One Man's Editorial

A Framing Analysis of E-Mails following the September 11th Attacks

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A Framing Analysis of E-Mails following the September 11th Attacks

By

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ABSTRACT

Following the September 11th attacks, critics came under fire for voicing concerns about U.S. foreign policy. In this paper, the author analyzes e-mail responses to one man’s editorial – comparing the discourse of those who read his opinions in alternative news websites versus the mainstream media. Relying on rhetorical and media framing theory, this qualitative study finds, whether or incensed or supportive, e-mailers take similar rhetorical approaches in their response to critical views.

"Deviance" & Discourse: How Readers Respond to One Man's Editorial: A Framing Analysis of E-mails Following the September 11th Attacks.

On September 11th, terrorists organized a massive action against the United States – hijacking four planes and crashing three into American landmarks. Thousands of people died as a direct result of these acts, the majority of them civilians. In the months since the tragedy, a growing number of critics have come forward to debate America's military reaction to the attacks and to raise concerns about U.S. international policy. The mass media has since become a forum for many of these discussions and, recently, has facilitated a diverse and reasoned discourse on the subject. However, in the days immediately following the attacks, such critical discourse generated dramatic, negative reactions.

Those who voiced criticisms and concerns about the government's role in (and its reaction to) the attacks came under immediate fire, particularly on America's college campuses. According to a report in the Chronicle of Higher Education, the terrorist attacks put academic freedom to the test (Wilson & Cox, 2001). Scholars, students, and even religious leaders found themselves singled out for voicing their views. One such report published by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni drew nationwide attention (Eakins, 2001). The ACTA is a conservative non-profit group which watches for liberal trends in academia – founded by Lynne Cheney, wife of U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney. Its report, entitled Defending Civilization: How our Universities Are Failing America and What Can Be Done About It, lists 116 specific cases where professors and others on college campuses expressed views the ACTA deemed inappropriately critical of America and its administration:

> While America's elected officials from both parties and media commentators from across the spectrum condemned the attacks and followed the President in calling evil by its rightful name, many faculty demurred. Some refused to make judgments. Many involved tolerance and diversity as antidotes to evil. Some even pointed accusatory fingers, not at the terrorists, but at America itself. (Defending Civilization, p. 1)

Among those cited in the report for making "anti-American" statements: The Reverend Jesse Jackson, for saying America should "build bridges and relationships, not simply bombs and walls," a student who's peace rally sign read "An eye for an eye leaves the world blind," and a University of Texas Journalism educator, who said "[The terrorist attack] was no more despicable than the massive acts of terrorism … that the U.S. government has committed during my lifetime."

This last case is a perfect exemplar of the difficulties Americans had with those who voiced unpopular and presumably "unpatriotic" views. Shortly after the attacks, an editorial appeared in a Texas newspaper (*Houston Chronicle*) criticizing U.S. policy in the Middle East (Jensen, 2001). The author argued that Americans should recognize the role their own government's policies played in the attacks. Written by Dr. Robert Jensen, a tenured Associate Professor of Journalism at the University of Texas at Austin, the editorial drew a dramatic response from readers, both in the paper's op/ed pages and in e-mails sent directly to Jensen and his superiors. Not surprisingly, Jensen's role as a journalism educator had a notable impact on peoples' reactions.

In the following paper, I examine a very small part of that public reaction – specifically, e-mails sent to Dr. Jensen following the publication of his views. In the modern media environment, the analysis of computer-generated, immediate reactions is a new and potentially-fruitful way to gauge audience response. Given that few researchers have focused on e-mails, this area is ripe for investigation.

Not only do I believe an analysis of these responses might be of interest to scholars and educators, the reaction to Jensen's remarks has affected me personally. Presently, I am a pursuing my Ph.D. in Journalism at UT. Several members of the public elected to copy their remarks to students within our department. Clearly, they wanted to share their concerns with students who might study under Jensen and/or be adversely affected by his perspectives. After receiving several of these e-mails, it became apparent the subject was worthy of study.

I am particularly interested in the variety of approaches e-mailers take in their responses. Many of their writings appear to fall into certain typologies or frames – particular ways they approach their arguments. Many argue their points in a way that parallels much of what we know about rhetorical theory, rhetorical genre, and framing theory. So, before discussing my analysis, I want to provide some background about these various theoretical approaches.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In short, to study Rhetoric means to study the way in which we make arguments. According to Ochs, the overriding emphasis is on a speaker or writer's methods, verbal or symbolic, for persuading an audience. In order to do this, the rhetor must first gauge an audience's beliefs, attitudes, and values, and then organize "materials, reasons, appeals, and claims into linguistic structures to effect change in an audience" (p. 1). Since Greco-Roman times, much has changed in the way scholars analyze and understand Rhetoric. Still, Borch-Jacobsen (1990) believes relatives of ancient Rhetoric live on in the present-day – in the way we study "speech acts" (p. 128), including those produced by the mass media:

> Our 'mediatized' societies, however different from Sicilian or Athenian democracies, are nonetheless similarly regulated by a rhetorical politics centered

> on the persuasive power of the probable and of popular opinion. (Borch-Jacobsen, p. 128)

The existence of common codes for building persuasive arguments are essential for understanding the way we communicate (Borch-Jacobsen, 1990; Sperber & Wilson, 1990). Whereas Classic Rhetoric analyzes the encoder's messages and the receiver's decoding of those specific messages, Sperber and Wilson believe modern communication involves a much richer dialogue that takes place in what is inferred or implied, versus what is specifically stated. Studying the "impressions" communicators create is necessary to the modern-day study of Rhetoric.

Probably the most common and enduring method for making arguments (and understanding them) involves the construction of binaries. Traditionally, persuasive message are arranged by pitting two sides against each other: black/white, male/female, right/wrong, normal/deviant. As Ochs points out, most "human things" go in pairs. The pairings illustrate fundamental differences between the two elements where each is defined largely by the "other." This method of organizing language and its meanings creates hierarchies, where one side (or term) is valued and the "other" is devalued (Ochs). While Burke (1969) believes the hierarchic principle is inevitable in systematic thought, he points out that such Rhetorical motives tend to be transformed "into rigid social classifications" (p. 141). In keeping with the present research project, an example may help illustrate the point. Shortly after the September 11th terrorist attacks, in the midst of a pro-war rally on the University of Texas campus, an organizer shouted out to the crowd: "Don't be an extremist. Be an American." In this instance, being "American" was clearly the valued term, implying that supporting the war was normal. Antithetically, being anti-war was linguistically and metaphorically tied to being "extremist."

The way in which arguments are made – and the way stories are told – can have a notable effect on how the message is perceived. This is particularly true when competing schools of thought come up against each other. Because events do not narrate themselves, "choices seem hard to escape, attitudes seem difficult to avoid: and there are always contexts which are far from neutral" (Leith & Myerson, 1989, p. 192). According to Leith and Myerson, "thinking Rhetorically can be a way of exploring precisely how the reading of stories may create (specific) ideas of history" (p. 196)

Rhetoric in Times of Crisis: Situations, Frames, & Genres

Rhetoric has historically concerned itself with issues about which people are most likely to find themselves engaging with opposing views (Leith & Myerson). Very typically, the "topics" are contentious. According to Ochs, Rhetorical discourse does not simply happen at random, "something must happen…that unbalances the homeostasis of the situation in which one lives one's life" (p. 20). Ochs calls this a Rhetorical situation and, here, moments of crisis are considered key opportunities for analysis. After a tragic occurrence (or death), Ochs believes the equilibrium of social life is disrupted, and:

> …unless addressed and remedied, can result in a host of social problems, not the least of which is a debilitating loss of direction and confidence in one's future. Anxiety about future relationships can escalate to damaging levels unless and until social, communal bonds are reestablished and reassured. (p. 26)

Citing the assassination of American President John F. Kennedy, Ochs believes the funeral ritual in which an entire nation participated (via television) did much to reestablish and reassure the national community. Visual images and their symbolic meanings (including military participation), removed doubts about national unity and helped repair societal disruption.

Mitchell (2000) believes the same can be said for the media's role in covering the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City. On April 19, 1995,169 people were killed and more than 500 injured when Timothy McVeigh blew up the building. Mitchell believes the media's exchange of information and the narratives it crafted helped America overcome the tragedy. Her study examines print media coverage following the incident to find out how various media groups chose to report the facts to their readers. She relies on symbolic convergence theory, which suggests people view reality through a shared set of narratives. According to Mitchell, "Journalists need to place the story in a compelling narrative form that draws upon the needs and values, and perceptions of their target audience" (p. 210), forcing them to select "certain facts, sources, and points of view while omitting others that might be equally valid" (p. 210). Mitchell finds print coverage tends to concentrate on the events themselves instead of the context of those events. News coverage, she says, tends to "repeat certain images, stereotypes, myths, and narratives, which may or may not provide an accurate, complete reflection of the story" (p. 210)

Taking a Rhetorical approach, Mitchell proposes a "news as melodrama" frame, where individuals become a cast of characters with a perceived hero(es) and villain(s), conflict that centers on the action of central characters, presented in a dramatic fashion, and made to fit into (and reinforce) the existing belief system of the dominant culture. According to Mitchell, terrorists become "evil villains" and their motivations and political messages are usually ignored. In the case of the Bombing coverage, Mitchell argues the media concentrating on fantasy themes about America's "heartland" (terrorism doesn't happen here), lost innocence, and good emerging from evil. She argues the country's authority figures were set up as central characters in these fantasy themes, reassuring Americans they were in control of the situation and would catch and punish the bombers.

Perloff (1998) has also studied Rhetoric in relation to national crisis. In his chapter, *Presidential Rhetoric: Genres and Impact*, the author examines the various frames (or genres) United States Presidents have employed in various settings, including the aftermath of the Oklahoma City Bombing. While he says there is scholarly disagreement over whether it is useful to lump speeches into rhetorical genres, "there is agreement that official and ceremonial speeches… perform an important system-maintenance function. They allow the presidency to survive crises and calamities. Words are not just objects hurled into the air; they matter, and they help citizens and elites adapt to changing circumstances" (p. 135).

Language, Nationalism, & The Media:

The same can be said about the media. According to Leith and Myerson, Classical Rhetorical Theory connects with the mass media by virtue of its ability to bring people together. They argue Rhetoric and the media, in combination, are central to nation building:

> People… do not naturally 'come together'; they need persuading to 'found cities', rather than to continue 'living as brutes'. There is nothing natural about society: arguments for living in a society must have been addressed to people at some stage, encountering and answering the 'other' view. (p. 98)

Anderson (1993) would likely agree, arguing that Nationalism be classified as an ideology and Nation as an "imagined political community":

> …imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. (Anderson, p. 15)

According to Anderson, before the 18th century, nationalistic ideology was largely defined by sacred religious texts (i.e.; he who is Jewish is not Muslim, therefore Christians live here and Jews live there). But with the rise of secularism and the advent of the printing press, Anderson argues print-capitalism became the new purveyor of nationalistic thought, making it possible "for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways" (p. 40).

Reading the newspaper, according to this view, becomes a form of "mass ceremony" where the product is consumed in "silent privacy in the lair of the skull" (p. 39). While the act may be private, Anderson believes, the fact that it is being "replicated simultaneously by thousands (or millions) of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion" constantly reassures the reader that his "imagined world is visibly rooted in every day life" (p. 39). As Anderson points out, the role of the newspaper as a cultural agent is particularly central in times of war and political crisis.

Media Framing Theory in Times of Unrest: The Protest Paradigm

If nationalism is, indeed, an ideology and if the media are key to accessing nationalistic discourse, it follows that the scope of the media discourse could have a profound impact on what media users consider to be "normal" or "deviant" views. By limiting discourse or shaping it in particular ways, the media may be practicing a form of social control. According to McLeod and Hertog (1999), the media can be powerful, homogenizing agents of social control, leading to the support of the status quo. In his book, The Whole World is Watching: Mass Media in the Making & Unmaking of the New Left, Gitlin (1977) says, just as the television and radio have become standard home furnishings, a considerable amount of media content has become part of America's "popular ideological furniture" (p. 8). He believes nationalistic ideology finds its way into the news (and into the minds of its readers/viewers) through journalists' routines (p. 11)

Many scholars believe the media not only reflect the dominant views of the society but also help maintain dominant views by crafting messages in particular ways. In the past thirty years, dozens (if not hundreds) of scholars have done research on media practices and the shaping of news content (Entman, 1993; Gitlin, 1977; McLeod & Hertog, 1999; Reese, Gandy, & Grant, 2001; Shoemaker & Reese, 1991; Tankard, 2001; Tuchman, 1978). Frequently referred to as framing theory, Tankard et al. define a media frame as "a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Tankard et al, 1991) McLeod and Hertog define framing as the "narrative structure that journalists use to assemble facts, quotes, assertions and other information into a new story" (p. 312). Largely unspoken and unacknowledged, Gitlin says media frames "are persistent patterns of cognition, interpretation, and presentation, of selection, emphasis, and exclusion, by which symbol-handlers routinely organize discourse" (p. 7).

One might think of a media frame as a template for covering certain types of news stories, a set of guidelines that news professionals and organizations might follow in their production process. Only a limited number scholars have used this theory to help explain media's coverage of "deviance" (Shoemaker; Shoemaker & Reese). Fewer still have used framing theory to study media coverage of dissent in times of political crisis (Gitlin; McLeod & Hertog). I focus here on two different approaches to studying protest frames – both of which may be useful in the present research project. Gitlin argues the media have become core systems for the distribution of ideology and points out, "one important task for ideology is to define—and also define away—its opposition" (p. 2). According to Gitlin, when it comes to covering protest movements, the media divide its coverage of those movements into legitimate main acts and illegitimate sideshows, so that these distinctions appear 'natural,' matters of 'common sense'" (p. 6).

In an effort to prove his point, Gitlin examines media coverage of protests organized and conducted by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) during the Vietnam War. He argues that the media used several particular frames to diminish the group's relevancy in American political discourse. Among others, Gitlin found that *CBS News* and the *New York Times* used the following four framing devices:

- *Trivialization* (making light of the movement language, dress, age, goals, etc.);
- *Polarization* (emphasizing counterdemonstrations and balancing the antiwar movement against ultra-Right and neo-Nazi groups as equivalent "extremists");
- *Marginalization* (showing demonstrators to be deviant or unrepresentative);
- *Deligitimization* (using quotation marks around words like "peace march").

According to Gitlin, some of the framing techniques employed during the protest coverage can be attributed to traditional assumptions in news treatment where "news coverage the event, not the underlying condition; the person, not the group; conflict, not consensus; the fact that 'advances the story,' not the one that explains it" (p. 28). Giltin suggests much of the protest coverage paralleled the type of coverage one might see in a typical crime story frame, where opposing views are treated as a sort of crime (p. 28).

According to McLeod and Hertog, "social control is like the wind – it is easiest to appreciate when your are going against it" (1999, p. 305) and that the media play an important role in the social construction of deviance. Like Gitlin, these authors discuss ways in protesters and their ideas are framed in mass media coverage. They believe protest frames are particularly productive grounds for research because the media employ very specific, social control mechanisms, which are relatively straightforward. Unlike the utopian ideal of the media as a marketplace of ideas, these authors suggest "when protesters challenge the system, they often get a hostile response from authorities, the public and the mass media" (p. 309).

Specifically, McLeod and Hertog believe the media tailor their messages to fit a *protest paradigm* by relying of official sources, invoking public opinion, and by delegitimization, marginalization, and demonization of those with views that differ from status quo. They say the media complete these tasks in characteristic ways. One method is to question the legitimacy of radical groups and their ideas. Specifically, the use of quotation marks (such as "peace march") tends to delegitimize whatever concept is in quotes. The media may also paraphrase protesters' perspectives instead of quoting them directly, suggesting their perspectives are not worthy of direct quotation. Next, the media may marginalize protesters' messages by accentuating how much that viewpoint deviates from the mainstream public. Or, the coverage might downplay the effectiveness of the protesters' efforts. The media might also demonize the group by exaggerating its potential threat to society and comparing protesters with "extremists." Lastly, the media might choose not to cover the group's efforts at all, effectively annihilating their message – suggesting the group is not worthy of media attention. According to the authors, the greater the "degree of extremism" of a protest group's ideological goals (message) and the more militant the group's behaviors, the more likely its members are to incur the brunt of social control messages (p. 310). They also postulate the more radical a group is perceived to be, the more closely journalists will conform to the protest paradigm when covering the group (p. 311).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Following the September 11th attacks, millions of Americans were in a state of shock. They sat in front of their televisions and watched the events unfold, live – even as terrorists were flying planes into buildings that symbolized America's military and business might. Witnessing the death and devastation first hand, millions of Americans started asking why. Among them, was Dr. Robert Jensen. Within hours, he and others critical of American foreign policy began discussing their views in the mainstream media and in "alternative" media environments.

How would Americans respond to such critical views in a time of crisis? Would the public frame their responses in much the same way media outlets framed protesters and demonstrators during the Vietnam War? Would Gitlin's typologies hold in a modern media environment – before mainstream media outlets had a chance to frame the debate for themselves? Specifically, regarding those who e-mailed their reactions directly to Dr. Jensen:

1) Do writers make light of or trivialize the perspectives of those with whom they disagree?
2) Do e-mail writers use quotation marks as a means of delegitimizing ideas counter to their own?
3) Do writers depict opposing views as being "deviant" or "unrepresentative"?
4) In light of Dr. Jensen's position as an academic and journalism educator, do detractors put any particular focus on these roles or do they focus primarily on his message?

METHODOLOGY

The Houston Chronicle published Jensen's editorial on September 14th, three days after the terrorist attacks. But virtually the same article was published just *one* day after the attacks on several internet web sites, including Commondreams.org, ZMag.org, and iviews.com. Such sites are dedicated to readers seeking alternatives to mainstream news sources. Simultaneously, Jensen was discussing his perspectives in the mainstream media, appearing as a guest on Texas radio stations.

People were hearing what he had to say from a variety of sources. This had a dramatic effect on the timing and substance of e-mail reactions. It also impacted my decision-making as to how to best analyze the e-mails he received. Reactions varied greatly depending on where people had heard or read his views. Interesting trends came into view, particularly when comparing those exposed to his opinions in "mainstream" versus "alternative" sources. It took approximately three days for clear patterns - demonstrating the variety of discourses - to emerge. By the end of the 14th, the scope of the discourse had been set. And being the most immediate, these early responses are also likely to be the most emotionally-charged, demonstrative examples of the principles discussed above.

Rather than counting specific occurrences of words or symbols in the e-mails, in this study, I take a qualitative approach in my analysis – searching for narrative similarities and strategic approaches that potentially serve to value or devalue Jensen's opinions. McLeod and Hertog call this a "communicative acts approach" where scholars (1) recognize the communicative nature of social control, and (2) define mass-mediated social control as "messages that reinforce some behaviors and punish others" (p. 308). But rather than focusing on methods and means of production and their categories of "normal" or "deviant" behavior, in the present study, I analyze messages written by those exposed to those messages with an eye towards central themes.

RESULTS

In the following analysis, I examine e-mails received between September 12th (the day Jensen's remarks appeared on-line) and September 14th (when his editorial appeared in the Chronicle). I included in the analysis e-mails sent directly to Dr. Jensen and e-mails sent to his supervisors, but only if those same e-mails were copied to Jensen. There were 284 responses in all. 134 were positive, showing support for Jensen's message. 131 were negative, opposing Jensen's message. 14 were neutral, generally raising questions about his ideas without suggesting a positive or negative attitude. In five cases I was unable to decipher the meaning of the writers' message.

At first blush, the numbers suggest a balanced response to Jensen's remarks. This is not necessarily the case. In large part, the order of their arrival makes the divisions in discourse more clear. First, I will discuss some general trends regarding the timing of the messages themselves. Then, I will analyze more particular issues regarding their content.

ORDER OF ARRIVAL:

As noted above, the timing and substance of e-mail responses suggests where the messages were seen (or heard). While somewhat quantitative in nature, Table 1 helps visualize the trends. The first responders were overwhelmingly positive. On September 12th, e-mails

Jensen received were almost 4-to-1 in favor of his perspectives. Better than half of the writers who responded on this day specifically mentioned reading the editorial on-line. Only three of the 55 people who e-mailed Jensen on the 12th mentioned hearing about his comments from mainstream sources (namely Texas radio stations). All three were opposed to his views.

Change was coming in the days to follow. On September 13th, positive reactions still outweighed negative ones, but as Jensen began making more appearances in mainstream venues, the tide was turning. By September 14th, the increase in the number of negative responses was dramatic. This was the day his editorial appeared in the Chronicle. Negative e-mails outweighed positive ones 3-to-1. 102 writers espoused negative views whereas only 47 e-mails were positive. Almost half of those who voiced negative opinions said they read or heard Jensen's remarks through mainstream media sources. While I was unable to determine where the other half had read his article, a large number of detractors referred to Jensen's "editorial" and signed their e-mails saying they lived in Texas, suggesting they had either read his remarks in the Chronicle or heard his comments on a Texas radio station.

WHAT THEY HAD TO SAY & HOW THEY SAID IT:

The substance of the e-mail messages also differed dramatically depending upon whether they accessed the material on-line or via a mainstream source. But the style did not necessarily vary. Regardless of the source, writers used similar tactics to defend or criticize Jensen's views.

TABLE 1:
BREAKDOWN OF E-MAIL RESPONSES

Date:	Type of Response	# of Responses	Source:
Sept. 12:	Positive	40	Web: 21 Mainstream: 0 Unable to Determine: 19
	Negative	12	Web: 3 Mainstream: 3 Unable to Determine: 6
	Neutral	3	Unable to Determine: 3
Sept. 13:	Positive	47	Web: 8 Mainstream: 1 Unable to Determine: 38
	Negative	17	Web: 0 Mainstream: 4 Unable to Determine: 13
	Neutral	1	Unable to Determine: 1
Sept. 14:	Positive	47	Web: 13 Mainstream: 7 Unable to Determine: 27
	Negative	102	Web: 0 Mainstream: 48 Unable to Determine: 54
	Neutral	10	Web: 0 Mainstream: 3 Unable to Determine: 7
Totals:	Positive	134	Web: 42 Mainstream: 8
	Negative	131	Web: 3 Mainstream: 55
	Neutral	14	Web: 0 Mainstream: 3
	Undecipherable	5	

Many of the positive and negative perspectives analyzed in this research project fell into frames similar to those outlined earlier by Gitlin.[1]

Trivialization: Age, Intelligence & Goals

In relation to the coverage of Vietnam protesters, Gitlin describes *trivialization* as a framing technique that makes light of the movement's language, dress, age, and goals. In this research project, language and dress generally did not factor into the analysis (although as you'll read later, facial hair as a symbol of leftist-leanings and Jensen's "turban" were briefly mentioned. However, Jensen's age and goals did play a role in the responses.

Age & Intelligence:

For the most part, very few writers mentioned Jensen's age in their responses, although some writers opposed to his views alluded to it and his presumed lack of military experience during the Vietnam War. While his chronological age was largely left alone, his *intellectual* maturity was regularly discussed. Many e-mailers felt Jensen was "naïve" and questioned his ability to "understand the complexities of war":

> Your call to "stop the insanity" is insane itself, and you obviously have not understanding of what has transpired.[2] (Shawn, 9/14/01)

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[1] Before reading on, I strongly suggest turning to the Appendix and reading Jensen's editorial before proceeding. To do so will provide an important frame of reference for what is to follow.

[2] E-mailers used a variety of font styles and sizes in their responses. For the purposes of this paper, both are standardized. However, any techniques writers used to make certain words or phrases stand out (such as capitalization and bolding) were kept as close to the original message as possible. Spelling and grammatical errors were not fixed or noted. They were simply replicated "as is."

> Don't worry smarter people than you will have to protect unappreciative stupid people like yourself because this is America. (George, 9/14/01)
>
> Our society is a boon to every one of its adherents and the envy of the world. I don't expect you to understand this. But for the sake of the nation that gave you freedom… please, try. (David, 9/12/01)
>
> I won't even get into your overly-simplistic understanding of world history and global politics. It is enough to say that your ignorance is probably enough for you to bear without me trying to explain it to you. (James, 9/14/01)

Jensen's detractors were not alone in their willingness to question the intellectual capabilities of those with whom they disagreed. While far less common, Jensen's supporters also used similar tactics (albeit their responses were somewhat more tame):

> IF we believe in justice and democracy in its purest form than we need to have a clear understanding of what exactly we are requesting. I think verity few of us actually understand the concept of democracy, myself included. (Courtney, 9/13/01)
>
> one would have had to have years of exposure to alternative info sources to even appreciate what you are driving at in your article. what do you say to someone who believes their govt promotes global democracy? (Brian, 9/14/01)

Not unlike the year 2000 presidential election campaign, there were also those who raised concerns about the "intellectual stamina" of America's President, George W. Bush.

Goals & Timing:

Many e-mailers also discussed, debated, affirmed, and lambasted Jensen's ideological goals. These comments were frequently politically-charged and involved a great deal of *marginalizing* and *polarizing* discourse. As a result, I analyze the majority of these remarks later in the paper. Here, though, I draw your attention to the concept of goals as they relate to timing - a central theme in the discourse of both supporters and detractors.

Those who contested Jensen's views were keen to point out the need for nation-building in a time of crisis. Generally, their responses called for uncritical support of America's government and uncritical acceptance of US foreign policy:

> …just when my nation needs unity - people like you try to divide us. You are shameless. I do not know what your great love of Iraq is, but I'm sure their immigration policies would gladly accept someone with your anti-American credentials. (Mike, 9/14/01)
> Now is a time for the nation to mourn and pull together… this is not a time to be reminded of a "We did it too" moral lesson. (Matthew, 9/14/01)
>
> "When I first read it I felt immediate anger and amazement that anyone would publish such views so close to the time of our national tragedy. Upon reflection, however, I believe the real tragedy of your writing is that you probably believe what you have written. (Ron, 9/14/01)
>
> This is not the time to stand up and point out the things from the past that this country has done wrong and try to destroy a nations unity. But rather, learn from those mistakes and make certain that they are avoided in the future. That is the job of our elected officials, If you need help, please call me and I'd be happy to help you move. (Timothy, 9/14/01)
>
> You had to have written the column while the smoke was literally still rising from the ruins… Could you not have waited a decent interval before desecrating the memory of the victims to decant the odious opinions in the article? Anyone with even a passing knowledge of the American political landscape knew that pseudo-intellectuals such as yourself would surface soon enough to pervert the truth and the facts. The alacrity you displayed in doing so, however, was breathtakingly tasteless. (AOL writer, 9/14/01)
>
> Too bad that you are not smart enough to know that this is not the time for such an unpatriotic article like yours running down America. (George, 9/14/01)
>
> This is absolutely the worst time for you to vent your frustration with previous administration's foreign policy decisions…. I find it extremely offensive for you to publish your utopian crap at this point in time. (Peter, 9/14/01)

In short, many detractors believed Jensen's comments were not only a matter of poor taste and timing but also undermined America's best interests.

Ironically, Jensen's supporters believed America's best interests were *exactly* what called for the immediate publication of his views. Amidst a nation "clamoring for retribution and revenge," many of these e-mailers saw Jensen's remarks as welcome relief from the isolation they felt – proof that others shared their deeply-held yet "unpopular" views. Contrary to Jensen's detractors, these e-mailers supported Jensen's timing and called for a critical examination of American foreign policy following the September 11th attacks:

> Unless we address the root causes of global terrorism, and our own culpability in creating them, we can only expect more tragedies and turmoil. (John, 9/13/01)
>
> I was feeling very alone in my fears of indiscriminate (or at best sloppy) U.S. retaliation and in my lack of patriotic ferver. Even my very left-wing base of friends and colleagues seem suddenly to be wrapping themselves in flags and hoping for revenge. I am sickened. I am saddened. But at least I know I'm not the only one feeling this way. (Shannon, 9/13/01).
>
> I was alone. The people around me were all feeling the prescribed feelings, thinking the prescribed thoughts.... but yesterday I felt as if a great canyon separated me from my fellow citizens, my neighbors, even my family, as even liberal friends began to spout jingoistic garbage and shift into mob mode. So your comments came just in time. (Charles, 9/12/01)
>
> ...columns such as yours are giving both a voice and hope to the apparently many like-minded people, and helping to form what I think will be a coalition of peace activists and critical leftists who don't see attacking Arabs or declaring war as the solution. (Dawne, 9/14/01)
>
> ...it is frustrating to see and hear the bloodlust of what seems like the overwhelming majority of our country. Your editorial offered me a glimmer of hope... (Amy, 9/12/01)
>
> Thank you for the courage of words and clarity of your thoughts and writing amidst all the patriotic, revengeful dialogue and written statements among people... (Naomi, 9/13/01)

Many of those who wrote in support of Jensen's views were calling for more context in media coverage. One writer dubbed his editorial an antidote to the "screeds from the mainstream media, calling for revenge" and argued that alternative perspectives were not being heard:

> ...reading the mainstream news is like trying to see and hear and think clearly in a wind tunnel, full of dust, and all the wind is talking war, and revenge and its hysteria that makes me afraid and saddened even more. (Michael, 9/13/01).
>
> I believe there are thousands, perhaps millions, of us Americans who refuse to be manipulated by the government and media into supporting the massive bloodbath that is coming. (Bob, 9/14/01).
>
> Why are opinions like yours not being heard in the national press during these difficult times. I hope that the thoughtful not the hateful are heeded and followed. (Ross, 9/12/01)
>
> ...I've been limited to watching ABC Disnews (as in Disney) on the satellite service here in Japan, and I have really been sickened by the vacuity and insanity of their perspective. What a relief to get back online today and find pieces like yours ... which put the incident into its true context. (Stewart, 9/14/01)
>
> Unfortunately the US media is either blind or just do not care for the truth. The media has convinced us that all Americans are now rallied behind the flag and are ready for war and ready to do whatever it takes. (Ali, 9/14/01)
>
> I applaud you sir for saying that which is difficult to say at t a time like this...it is unpopular to scrutinize American philosophy right now.. but now is when we need it most... before we are lulled back into our surreal slumber. (Matt, 9/14/01)

Delegitimization: Equal Opportunity Quotation Marks

According to Gitlin, another framing technique commonly used against protest groups is called *deligimization* – making the group and its goals seem *less than* ideal. The use of quotation marks is a key tactic, such as putting quotation marks around "peace rally." Generally, the quotation marks serve as a sort of wink to the reader suggesting that words within quotes are up for debate. In this study, both those who support and contest Jensen's remarks used quotation marks in this way.

First, to those who expressed negative opinions about Jensen's editorial. Almost exclusively, these e-mailers employed quotation marks as a means of questioning Jensen's role as an academician and his political leanings:

> Even when I went to college 30 years ago "liberal" professors had no time for "critical" thinking from anyone but themselves and the like-minded. Today, now that all of the liberal arts majors taught by that cadre are in positions such as yours, only one point of view is tolerated. (Charles, 9/14/01)

> As a former Soviet citizen now living in the US I want to tell you "professor" that you are a scum on par with all the Soviet ideologues who were blaming America for all the evils of the world. (G., 9/14/01)

> I wonder if you truly believe your own statements… or whether this is just another effort by a liberal academician to make himself appear "intellectual" by making "controversial" statements that fly in the face of mainstream public sentiment. (David, 9/14/01)

> I can't believe someone of your stature and "intellectual" background would have the gall to make such dissention regarding our nation. (9/14/01)

While detractors took aim at Jensen's intelligence and political bend, many of his supporters chose to question the capabilities of their "leaders," as well as concepts of "democracy" and what it means to be "mainstream":

> I wanted to thank you for your recent article in Z Magazine expressing the hope… that our pathetic "leaders" will not use the World Trade Center bombing as an excuse to murder innocent civilians… (Dev, 9/13/01).

> What's that scientific law that says for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction? I do believe that our government has done many terrible things in the guide of spreading "democracy"…. Playing tit for tat only ends in more death and chaos. (Courtney, 9/13/01)

> It is truly frightening that no one in the "mainstream media" is willing to approach the tragedy from this viewpoint." (Jackie, 9/12/01)

> During the past two days, the commentary of television news anchors and reporters, as well as the remarks of many of our national "leaders" have betrayed a frightening lack of understanding of our relationship with the rest of the world. (Ed, 9/12/01)

> If only the "real" media was as truthful. (Chris, 9/12/01)

Polarization and Marginalization: Binaries on Both Sides

Labeling protesters as "deviant" or unrepresentative and emphasizing their "extremist" views are also techniques commonly used to frame protesters and their goals. Gitlin calls these tactics *marginalization* and *polarization* respectively. While he analyzes these frames separately, in this study, I have chosen to combine them into a single category. Primarily, I did this because, in this case, it was extremely difficult to separate the two. Both framing devices involve the construction of binaries – where something ideal is juxtaposed with its opposite. This is especially evident when different schools of thought come up against each other in times of crisis, making the current analysis ripe for comparison.

Among those opposed to Jensen's views, writers made clear that they feared a loss of direction and confidence in the country following the September 11th attacks. In the case of Jensen's editorial, they remedied this anxiety by speaking out against ideas they perceived to be dangerous. E-mailers commonly referred to Jensen's views as "unpatriotic," "anti-American," "warped," "ignorant," "idiotic," "cowardly," "fringe," "liberal," "moronic," and "sick." They called him a "humanistic freak," "weak," a "gutless puke," "spineless" and "misguided." They called his editorial "verbal vomit," "pure crap," and a "disgrace" to their country:

> As extraordinarily complex as the political and historical circumstances which spawned the mentality of those who perpetrated this violence are, the resulting choices of reactions are extraordinarily simple. We either condone it (and thereby further encourage it), or we combat it. In this, sir, there is no gray in spite of the accuracy of your observation that "grief that is limited to those within a specific political boundary denies the humanity of others." (Jack, 9/14/01).

> Your statements concerning the past deeds of my great nation are so one sided that I can not even respond. My nation has led this world in fighting for human rights and freedom for all. Your perverted view distorts facts and uses them to promote an obvious anti-American agenda. (Michael, 9/14/01)

> May you and David Duke enjoy your morally equivalent common place at the bottom of the American idea barrel. (Sandy, 9/14/01)

> I blame people like you for what happened earlier this week and it's idiots like you who will stand in the way of being able to defend ourselves and our country. (Douglas, 9/14/01)

> Sir, you are doing exactly what our enemies want. I hope and pray that you will reassess your thinking and join the rest of America in defending our people, our way of life, and your right to write what you want to write. (Charley, 9/14/01)

Writers were particularly appalled at Jensen for drawing a moral equivalence between "unintended civilian casualties" in previous American military operations and the civilian casualties in September 11th attacks:

> You commie traterous lying bastard. We have never targeted civilians in the way you described..... this was always a battle between you the commie left and our free way of life. Are we perfect ..no ...but your moral equivalence is evil ...go to hell and rot you leftist, hate America 1st, son of a bitch. (R., 9/14/01)

> Scum like you don't deserve to live in this country....you and all of your other Berkeley-loving, Commie-symping, quiche-eating, hippie ass, Age of Aquarius, beard-wearing vermin are a scourge in this country. You are an insult to the memory of those who died this week. (Kip, 9/13/01)

Many suggested that he take his "communist" views and move somewhere he might be more comfortable. In fact, many offered to pay the tab:

> Go back to Afghanistan, you fucking traitor. (George, 9/12/01)

> We don't need your type of people in our country. You should just go and live with Bhen Laden in Afganistan with your turban on your head. (Alicia, 9/14/01).

Jensen's detractors voiced their particular displeasure with his position in the academy and his potential impact on young minds – particularly future journalists:

> Your pitiful attempt to equate this ruthless unwarranted attack on innocent civilians with previous US attempts to stop foreign aggression or human abuse is both unpatriotic & frightening. It is frightening only because you are in a position to influence young minds & promote your anti-American sentiments. (W., 9/14/01)

> I was extremely disgusted with your comments and hope that you're not trying to shove that way of thinking down the throats of your students. The last thing this country needs is more people that think like that." (D., 9/13/01)

> I suspect you are one of those folks who feel no affinity for your countrymen or your country and spend your days comfortably escounced in some ivory tower spouting the kind of jiberish that is contained in your horrific article to teenagers too inexperienced in the ways of the world to offer any challenge to your warped world view. (Chuck, 9/14/01)
> God protect us if you are allowed to have any direct contact with impressionable college students! (Cameron, 9/14/01)
>
> It saddens me to know that you influence students. Not because of your views or opinions, but what appears to be your lack of education on a number of social issues that plague this nation and our world. (Steven, 9/13/01)
>
> The espousing of one's own political views in the teaching of what SHOULD be an analytical and non-political profession can only be viewed as prejudiced, to be kind. However it is more correctly categorized as a blatant attempt at brainwashing. (Charles, 9/14/01)

Readers who held this view frequently forwarded their comments on to the University's President, Dean of the College of Communication, and Director of the University's School of Journalism. In some cases, they wrote directly to Jensen's superiors and copied their remarks to Dr. Jensen:

> I cringe at the fact that he holds a position of influence in the lives of students that he has been charged to educate. Personally, I am embarrassed that my University… will allow this to continue. I'm finding it harder and harder to support the institution that I love due to the administration's fear of standing up to rogue faculty members and fringe groups. (David, 9/13/01)
>
> Not only should you be utterly ashamed, you should not be allowed to continue to poison the young minds of your students with the perverse and pathetically flawed logic you spew. (Jack, 9/14/01)

Many of these detractors called for Jensen's immediate firing and threatened to withhold any future financial contributions to the institution until he was no longer on the faculty. Others said they would forever refuse to send their children to the University.

For their part, those who supported Jensen and his views used similar tactics to set themselves apart from the crowd. They likened called themselves "humane" and "pacifist" while calling those with opposing views "war mongerers" and "jingoists." They frequently likened themselves to being "thoughtful" versus "uncritical" or "ignorant":

> Seems to me those of us who feel that way are in the distinct minority right now, and it's good to make connections in the midst of the jingoism and barely veiled xenophobia. (Wendell, 9/12/01)
>
> "please let the pacifists and healers be heard" over the blood-thirsty sentiments and violent din expressed all around us. (Mary, 9/12/01)

> It is frightening to live in a sea of humanity that is so ignorant of our history of predation, and so intent on revenge - it's a mob psychology that our leader will take full advantage of. (Arden, 9/13/01)

> The saber-rattling out of Washington scares me infinitely more than terrorism. Bush says America was attacked because it was a 'beacon of freedom in the world' and, elsewhere, that 'democracy and freedom' have been targeted. I know it's nonsense. I know it's jargon and political spin and rehashed Cold War rhetoric because neither he nor anyone else in the US government is going to talk to the American people about what the real antecedents of this horror were. (Wendell, 9/12/01)

As for being un-American:

> I know you don't need me to tell you this but you are not un-American (whatever the hell that is). You are simply trying to defend the basic idea of America and what it is we as a nation claim to be about. (Courtney, 9/13/01)

> I am so tired of the waves of patriotism that follow these occurrences. You are somehow considered un-American if you question the actions of your government. I was always taught to believe that belonging to a democracy meant that you had a responsibility to help govern. We cannot do this if we are not informed. We as true Americans must learn to question everything... (Laura, 9/12/01)

While detractors criticized Jensen's lack of journalistic objectivity and his potentially "poisonous" perspectives, there were others who wrote to Jensen to thank him for thinking through troubling issues and having a positive impact on journalism and academia:

> It is refreshing to see an unbiased opinion, and to see the truth for what it is. (Sandra, 9/14/01)

And from a teacher who was struggling with how to discuss the attacks with his own students:

> ...I found myself unable to face those classes without discussing the role of U.S. foreign policy in these tragic events, and the tragedies in other places likely to accompany the US "response." Nevertheless, I have since wondered about the wisdom of my decision, in spite of the fact that my students seemed to handle it all quite well, but am feeling now as if my classroom is probably the ONLY place where those issues will be raised. (Karen, 9/13/01)

DISCUSSION

Perhaps not surprisingly, e-mailers' reactions to Jensen's editorial were largely influenced by their own political views and correlated with where they read his remarks. For the most part, those who read (or heard) his comments in the mainstream media were likely to respond negatively whereas those who read his article in alternative internet sites were likely to respond positively. There were those who did not follow this pattern. Some who read Jensen's remarks on-line say they were "disgusted" with his message. And some who read his editorial in the paper praised him for his "rational analysis." In future research, it might be particularly interesting to conduct a more detailed examination of these responses.

The majority of responses included in this analysis came from American citizens – but not exclusively. Several e-mailers from other countries chimed in as well. While I did not break their responses out separately, it is interesting to note, international e-mailers overwhelmingly supported Jensen's views (18-to-2).

Based on my own reading of their remarks, very few writers fell into what one might call a neutral category. These writers frequently quoted directly from Jensen's editorial and said, while they understood the point he was trying to make, they did not understand what solutions he might offer America in this time of crisis. Many of these e-mailers were well-reasoned and calm in their reactions. They simply wanted to share their own perspectives and were seeking additional information.

However, for the purposes of this study, I did not include a discussion of their views as these writers tended to avoid framing their remarks in the same way that "positive" or "negative" writers did.[3] Those who had visceral reactions to Jensen's remarks were far more common. What was perhaps most interesting to me was the way in which writers chose to voice their perspectives. Those who agreed with Jensen rarely, if ever, used foul or excessively derogatory language to make their point.

On the other side of the discourse, however, the language was commonly vitriolic. Due to the nature of their remarks, I find it unnecessary to include specifics. Suffice it to say, those who disagreed with Jensen commonly used offensive words and, at times, advocated his forcible removal from the academy and the country. Others said they wished he would die:

> You were in the wrong tower on Tuesday, September 11th. Instead of your ivory tower at Austin, it would have been better for mankind if you had been in Tower 2 of the World Trade Center, on or above the 90th floor at 9:03 AM.... You would have had some minutes before being asphyxiated or burned to death to reflect on the fruits of your despicable liberal socialism... (Bruce, 9/25/01)

The majority of e-mails Jensen received opposing his views mimicked the rhetoric of America's administration shortly after the attacks. As President George Bush made clear in the days and weeks following the attacks – either you're with us or you're against us. Perhaps nowhere was that perspective put more succinctly than the writer who addressed his e-mail to "Osama Bob Jensen."

This study is somewhat unusual. Typically, media scholars use framing theory to dissect messages produced directly by the media. I have found no other case where scholars have applied the theory to messages produced by members of the audience. Historically, the study of persuasion and argumentation has largely been left up to Rhetoricians. It seem, however, that the two bodies of knowledge are really quite similar and should be used more frequently in conjunction with one another in both media and audience research.

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[3] In this study, I focused exclusively on translating e-mails in ways that mimicked Gitlin's categories. In the process of doing so, I am afraid I myself fell into the trap of creating binaries. Using categories like "negative" and "positive" are not necessarily the best way to go. However, for the sake of simplicity, it seemed the thing to do. I apologize to those who take issue with this. I urge you to understand, however, that the majority of people who chose to e-mail professor Jensen did so because they felt forcefully about their opinions, and worded them as such.

In this case, Gitlin's framework worked particularly well in the analysis of individuals' responses to a contentious issue. Because it worked so well, I'm sorry to say, that these results have raised more questions in my mind than they have provided answers. First and foremost, I wonder about the role of framing theory in media studies. As stated earlier, many scholars believe by fitting frames around certain types of stories (particularly protest frames), the media helps to maintain the society's status quo. This would suggest that people who watch, listen, and read mediated messages are affected by what they see and hear and are moved to respond in ways that are similar to the messages they receive from the media.

On the other hand, in this case, e-mailers responded before the media had a chance to frame its coverage. Therefore, if individuals in this study are any indication of a wider phenomenon, people (in general) use many of these techniques to frame their arguments – regardless of whether they work for the media or not. Could it be that these are not so much "media frames" as they are "human frames." Could it be that individual members of the media (writers, producers, reporters) are not "framing" protesters in a way that differs from the long-studied tactics of rhetorical argument-making?

Then again, perhaps another media effects theory is at work here. Cultivation theory posits that those who rely heavily on media messages are likely to view their world in ways consistent with the messages they receive (Gerbner et. al, 1994). Time and again, George Gerbner and his associates have demonstrated this to be true in a variety of mediated conditions. Extending the ideas to the present analysis, theoretically, if the public grows up exposed to media messages they might tend to adopt the media's methods for dealing with dissent under crisis conditions. Even though the media had yet to adopt a frame in this case, perhaps writers were responding to ways in which other dissenters in the past had been framed by the media.

It is impossible to know what approach is more appropriate. One gives power to the media. The other provides agency to the audience. Like many media effects debates, it is somewhat of a chicken-or-the-egg argument – one that will never likely be solved. Still, I hope that the data included in this study adds to the discussion.

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"Deviance" & Discourse: How Readers Respond to One Man's Editorial: A Framing Analysis of E-mails Following the September 11th Attacks.

APPENDIX

Includes Full Text of the Following:

September 11 Was a Day of Sadness, Anger and Fear. Dr. Robert Jensen.
Published on Iviews.com. September 12, 2001

Stop the Insanity Here. Dr. Robert Jensen.
Published on CommonDreams.org/views/01/0912-08.htm. September 13, 2001

U.S. Just as Guilty of Committing Own Violent Acts. Dr. Robert Jensen
Published in *The Houston Chronicle*. September 14, 2001

September 11 Was a Day of Sadness, Anger and Fear

Copyright: http://www.iviews.com
Published Wednesday September 12, 2001

By Robert Jensen

Like everyone in the United States and around the world, I shared the deep sadness at the deaths of thousands.

But as I listened to people around me talk, I realized the anger and fear I felt were very different, for my primary anger is directed at the leaders of this country and my fear is not only for the safety of Americans but for innocents civilians in other countries. It should need not be said, but I will say it: The acts of terrorism that killed civilians in New York and Washington were reprehensible and indefensible; to try to defend them would be to abandon one's humanity. No matter what the motivation of the attackers, the method is beyond discussion.

But this act was no more despicable as the massive acts of terrorism -- the deliberate killing of civilians for political purposes -- that the U.S. government has committed during my lifetime. For more than five decades throughout the Third World, the United States has deliberately targeted civilians or engaged in violence so indiscriminate that there is no other way to understand it except as terrorism. And it has supported similar acts of terrorism by client states.

So, my anger on this day is directed not only at individuals who engineered the Sept. 11 tragedy but at those who have held power in the United States and have engineered attacks on civilians every bit as tragic.

If that statement seems outrageous, ask the people of Vietnam. Or Cambodia and Laos. Or Indonesia and East Timor. Or Chile. Or Central America. Or Iraq, or Palestine. The list of countries and peoples who have felt the violence of this country is long. Vietnamese civilians bombed by the United States. Timorese civilians killed by a U.S. ally with U.S.-supplied weapons. Nicaraguan civilians killed by a U.S. proxy army of terrorists. Iraqi civilians killed by the deliberate bombing of an entire country's infrastructure.

So, my anger on this day is directed not only at individuals who engineered the Sept. 11 tragedy but at those who have held power in the United States and have engineered attacks on civilians every bit as tragic. That anger is compounded by hypocritical U.S. officials' talk of their commitment to higher ideals, as President Bush proclaimed "our resolve for justice and peace."

To the president, I can only say: The stilled voices of the millions killed in Southeast Asia, in Central America, in the Middle East as a direct result of U.S. policy are the evidence of our resolve for justice and peace. Though that anger stayed with me off and on all day, it quickly gave way to fear, but not the fear of "where will the terrorists strike next," which I heard voiced all around me. Instead, I almost immediately had to face the question: "When will the United States, without regard for civilian casualties, retaliate?" I wish the question were, "Will the United States retaliate?" But if history is a guide, it is a question only of when and where.

So, the question is which civilians will be unlucky enough to be in the way of the U.S. bombs and missiles that might be unleashed. The last time the U.S. responded to terrorism, the attack on its embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998, it was innocents in the Sudan and Afghanistan who were in the way. We were told that time around they hit only military targets, though the target in the Sudan turned out to be a pharmaceutical factory.

As I monitored television during the day, the talk of retaliation was in the air; in the voices of some of the national-security "experts" there was a hunger for retaliation. Even the journalists couldn't resist; speculating on a military strike that might come, Peter Jennings of ABC News said that "the response is going to have to be massive" if it is to be effective.

Let us not forget that a "massive response" will kill people, and if the pattern of past U.S. actions holds, it will kill innocents. Innocent people, just like the ones in the towers in New York and the ones on the airplanes that were hijacked. To borrow from President Bush, "mother and fathers, friends and neighbors" will surely die in a massive response.

If we are truly going to claim to be decent people, our tears must flow not only for those of our own country. People are people, and grief that is limited to those within a specific political boundary denies the humanity of others.

And if we are to be decent people, we all must demand of our government -- the government that a great man of peace, Martin Luther King Jr., once described as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world" -- that the insanity stop here.

Robert Jensen is a professor of journalism at the University of Texas

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Published on Wednesday, September 12, 2001

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by Robert Jensen

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Let us not forget that a "massive response" will kill people, and if the pattern of past U.S. actions holds, it will kill innocents. Innocent people, just like the ones in the towers in New York and the ones on the airplanes that were hijacked. To borrow from President Bush, "mother and fathers, friends and neighbors" will surely die in a massive response.

If we are truly going to claim to be decent people, our tears must flow not only for those of our own country. People are people, and grief that is limited to those within a specific political boundary denies the humanity of others.

And if we are to be decent people, we all must demand of our government -- the government that a great man of peace, Martin Luther King Jr., once described as "the greatest purveyor of violence in the world" -- that the insanity stop here.

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COMPLICATING COMMUNICATION: REVISITING AND REVISING PRODUCTION/CONSUMPTION

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Submitted for consideration to the Cultural and Critical Studies Division, AEJMC National Convention, Miami Beach, FL, August 7-10, 2002.

ABSTRACT:

COMPLICATING COMMUNICATION: REVISITING AND REVISING PRODUCTION/CONSUMPTION

This essay addresses the core assumption made in communication research of the division of the communication process into producers and consumers. It argues that the uncritical acceptance of "producers" and "consumers" as empirical, decontextualized descriptions of roles in a linear relationship disables efforts to theorize and explore more nuanced and ultimately more incisive accounts of communication in society. The essay critiques this division, discusses efforts to complicate it, then revisits Marx's initial discussion of the dialectical constitution of production and consumption as a way of renewing understanding and debate regarding the status and deployment of production and consumption in media studies.

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COMPLICATING COMMUNICATION: REVISITING AND REVISING PRODUCTION/CONSUMPTION

This essay addresses some core assumptions of communication research in the hopes of enhancing critical reflection on the study of media and society. Of central concern here is the partitioning of communication itself into the divisions of senders and receivers—or, to use more contemporary terms, producers and consumers. While many often valiant attempts seek to jettison simplistic, functionalist debates that revolve solely around who has more power in this relationship, the uncritical acceptance of "producers" and "consumers" as empirical, decontextualized descriptions of roles in a linear relationship disables efforts to theorize and explore more nuanced and ultimately more incisive accounts of communication in society.

After summarizing the core assumptions of what Gitlin (1978) calls the dominant paradigm, this essay discusses the emergence of the concepts of production and consumption in communication research in the United States. It continues by discussing a selection of recent efforts to overcome the linear, decontextualized, segmented view of communication in which many scholars have couched their analyses of the producer/consumer relationship. Despite some useful attempts that pose some version of a mutual or reciprocal power relationship between producer and consumer, such efforts nevertheless have retained distinctions that essentialize certain core assumptions within these concepts. Indeed, this uncritical acceptance of the very categories limits scholars' ability to conceptualize accelerating changes in industries, technologies, and modes of sociality. Similarly, while reconceptualizations of the communication process away from a linear producer/consumer model and toward more dynamic conceptualizations begin to draw attention to the porous, mutually constitutive nature of production and consumption, such models nevertheless have difficulty retaining a critical view of communication and society in terms of adequately recognizing and theorizing power relationships.

As a response to this continuing difficulty, the essay seeks to revisit and recover a broadly conceived materialist perspective. Although marxisms (rendered here with a small "m" and pluralized following Haslett's (2000) point that there is no unitary body worthy of capitalized, proper-noun status) have no monopoly on critical theorizing about communication and society, Marx's writings constitute an important touchstone to agree with or argue against, and thus occupy an important position that deserves attention. Thus, this essay revisits Marx's initial statement on the nature and relationships between production and consumption in order to recover nuances from this early and still relevant critique. And, because Marx himself said little if anything explicitly about matters of culture and communication in the way these terms are used today, the essay concludes by broadly characterizing a materialist perspective that employs the producer and consumer as dialectical, historical, analytic categories. Due to the space constraints of a single essay, only a small selection of key or paradigmatic works can be presented, fitting the modest intention of recovering and suggesting the framework of an argument in order to stimulate further reflection and debate about these and related issues.

The "dominant paradigm" and its implications

Despite close to 50 years between Wilbur Schramm's (1954) initial formulation of the three fundamental elements of communication as the communicator, the message, and the receiver, little seems to have changed regarding the relevance of this scheme for communication research. As Ettema and Whitney (1994) note, Schramm's list of key elements "still captures well what most mass communication research is all about" (p. 3).

The seeming stability and reliability of this formulation obscures the way in which it is centrally implicated in what Gitlin (1978) refers to as the "dominant paradigm" of media research. Choices about concepts and their deployment in theoretical frameworks are profound decisions in that they structure research questions, agendas, and results. By assuming that the purpose of studying media is to assess the impact of messages upon message receivers, scholars have situated their research at the individual level and concerned themselves with attitude change. These seemingly neutral methodological choices, Gitlin (and many others before and since) argues, highlights "the recalcitrance of audiences, [and] their resistance to media-generated messages." Furthermore, by defining media effects so "narrowly, microscopically, and directly," such a perspective makes it "very likely that survey studies could show only slight effects at most" (Gitlin 1978, pp. 205-206).

Most fundamentally, however, Gitlin argues that the problem is not with method, but with the fetishization of method at the expense of a critical awareness of the determination of method (and the resulting pre-determination of results) by the theoretical framework employed. Media-effects research has not simply "put the methodological cart before the theoretical horse," it has "procured a horse that could pull its particular cart": a valorization of pluralistic conceptions of society (Gitlin 1978, p. 206.). As a corrective to the direct-effects, "hypodermic-needle" theory of communication formulated in studies of propaganda, the "personal influence paradigm" voiced by Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) sought to downplay the role of media while returning attention to the social milieu in which communication took place.

Yet, as Gitlin argues in a close reading of Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) study, not only does this initial study exhibit fatal internal ambiguities, inconsistencies, and contradictions, the conception of power as individualized, personal influence presumes that (in Gitlin's paraphrase) "everyone has the opportunity to exercise 'personal influence' directly on someone else, albeit informally, and [that] generally the relation is reciprocal." In this way, no distinction is drawn between the "influence" exerted by media conglomerates and that exerted by individuals in interpersonal contexts (Gitlin 1978, p. 213).

In addition to drawing attention to the complicity of theory, method, and underlying assumptions, critiques by Gitlin and others of the dominant paradigm imply an even more fundamental assumption. This assumption presumes the division between, on the one hand, a producer of messages who seeks to persuade or inform people, and a consumer of those same messages, who either accepts or rejects the messages' effects. Two implicit assumptions about communication depend on this one. First, communication is considered a linear event of message transmission beginning with the producer and concluding at the consumer. Second, message transmission is assumed to be concerned with individuals and single messages that can be plucked out and isolated from the connecting tissue of everyday social life and the historical world.

Most broadly, the pluralist conception of power and society that these assumptions rely upon has undergone substantial criticism throughout the social sciences and humanities. As summarized by Hall (1988), a pluralist conception defines power as one person influencing or persuading another person to take some kind of action or to adopt some kind of belief. Such a conception, writes Hall, limits the concept of power by suggesting that the "various decisions made did not cohere within any single structure of domination, or favor exclusively any single interest." Power is thus pluralized, dispersed, and random, fitting a pluralist conception of society so prevalent in the United States for much of the 20th Century (Hall 1988, pp. 64-65).

Yet, in the wake of the social upheavals of the 1960s, such a one-dimensional, behaviorist conception came under sharp revision, the after-effects of which are still being worked out academically and politically. If power is recognized not as dispersed, random, individual acts of persuasion, but as the process by which the range of legitimate choices regarding any single situation is limited, or, more deeply, as the production of a "common sense" that endows a particular social order with an aura of inevitability or naturalness, the simple producer-consumer model of communication from the dominant paradigm becomes incapable of addressing issues of this scope and scale (Hall 1988, p. 65).

The emergence of production/consumption in mainstream communication research

The habit of identifying the participants in the communication process as producers and consumers derives not from empirical observation as much as from a specific set of historical conditions. Understanding such conditions makes clearer the larger role such categories have played in communication scholarship in the United States.

The current conceptual distinction between producers and consumers is an outcome of liberal political-economic thinking formulated during the emergence and theorization of industrial capitalism in 18th-century Europe. This conceptual framework generally regards a market system as a neutral exchange between self-sufficient, self-interested, and rational buyers and sellers. In contrast to earlier views, concrete "acts of making and using goods and services were newly defined in the increasingly abstract pairings of producer and consumer, production and consumption" (Williams 1976, p. 69). Paired with the now-archaic equivalence drawn between communication and transportation (inferring that communication was an exchange of material goods such as newspapers), a conceptual framework of communication as an exchange between producers and consumers fit well with the individualist, laissez-faire politics and culture of 19th-Century United States, especially in the way it implied an equality between each party in this exchange (Carey 1989).

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, communication emerged explicitly as a topic of social inquiry in the United States. The degree to which producer/consumer delimited participants and roles in the communication process depended on which of two intellectual streams such inquiry relied. On one hand, the communitarian forays of Chicago School sociologists into the topic of communication expressed an interest in communication as a means of building a nationwide community of equals (Wilson 1968; Quandt 1970; Matthews 1977; Czitrom 1982, pp. 91-121; Bulmer 1984). Such a view emerged primarily from insights from German philosophy, history, and social criticism that American scholars gained during study in Germany (Hardt 1979; Hardt 1998). In such a view, the division of community and society into individualist, competitive, antagonistic roles of "production" and "consumption" was nonsensical, and actually became the focus at the time of pointed social criticism.

On the other hand, such a theoretical basis was soon challenged and overcome by behaviorism within the context not only of American pluralist traditions, but also of social fears about the irrationality of the masses and the rise of fascism. The need to technically administer and contain popular movements in the interest of social control replaced the hope of creating a community of equals (Ross 1991). Fears about the destabilizing effects of unmediated propaganda prompted initial research into the field of "mass" communication. Paired with media-industry needs to rationalize and study the effectiveness of their operations, communication became defined in this framework as the one-way flow of messages between producers and passive (in this case) consumers (Hardt 1992, pp. 77-122; Mosco and Kaye 2000).

This development corresponded to a similar position in more traditional humanities scholarship. Informed by fears of the debasement of popular sensibilities by commercialized culture, commentators such as Dwight MacDonald and Ortega y Gasset in such collections as Rosenberg and White's landmark volume *Mass Culture; The Popular Arts in America* relied as well on a conceptualization of communication structured by the assumption of powerful producers and passive audiences (Rosenberg and White, 1957).

More recent arguments in mass-communication research in America about the power of communication typically take up a position regarding the comparative strength of producers vis-à-vis consumers. Indeed, such a position is deemed to be so central that entire theoretical programs define themselves through this key issue. Positions defined on the side of consumer autonomy include personal influence and two-step flow (Katz and Lazarsfeld 1955), limited effects (Klapper 1960), and uses-and-gratifications (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch 1974). By contrast, positions in addition to behaviorist perspectives that emphasize the greater power of producers include agenda-setting (McCombs and Shaw 1972) and cultivation research (Gerbner et al. 1985). Despite many differences, both groups agree on the conception of communication as composed of producers and consumers, with relevant differences consisting of which side has more power in this process.

Complicating production/consumption in critical approaches

Scholars reflecting upon the dynamics of the communication process within critical and cultural research traditions have also debated the locus of power in the sender/receiver relationship. Some have also tended to theorize some variant of passive or active audience, analyzing communication in terms of meaning consumption, with others seeking to emphasize producer/consumer interactivity or forms of cultural mediation.

Theoretical commentaries since the 1980s have responded in large part to cynical theories of mass culture by ascribing power in various ways to audiences. Mass-culture studies of passive audiences viewed producers as manipulative conduits of messages that funneled meaning to naïve audiences in a linear relationship. Often citing the Frankfurt School's notion of the "culture industry," such scholarship adopted a model of meaning dissemination closely aligned with the "effects" tradition of communication research and surprisingly distant from the Frankfurt School's more complex view. Indeed, Frankfurt School scholarship often has been dismissed as simplistic mass-culture commentary that concentrates too heavily on producer's power and underestimates consumers as "cultural dupes."

Such dismissals, however, inadequately assess its view of audiences in communication processes. (see Featherstone, 1991, p. 14). A second look at Horkheimer's and Adorno's (1989 [1972]) commentary on the Enlightenment suggests a more complex and nonlinear dialectical perspective that necessitates a view of audiences as active, even as they encounter and often submit to a repressive "culture industry." Horkheimer and Adorno's general understanding of social development holds that the Enlightenment, which harked advances in humankind's rational, technological and social development, paradoxically also ensured people's "alienation from that over which they exercise their power" (p. 9). Viewing capitalism as the manifestation of Enlightenment thought, they argued that the division of labor in capitalism, while representing a "technical easing of life" and an advance in reason and power, also forced people into positions of subordination, self-alienation, objectification and repression as they grew dependent on technology and advances in knowledge for survival (p. 35). Importantly, their view of the Enlightenment as dialectical—as simultaneously and mutually constituting progress as well as repression in social life—grounds their understanding of social processes in capitalist societies. As a result, and when extending this argument to Enlightenment communicative processes, it can be argued that both producers and consumers are seen as active participants within a capitalist system.

In any case, much scholarship in the 1980s and 1990s emphasized consumer logic and consumer power as a starting point for cultural analyses. Many such analyses concentrated on the active audience as a legitimate resistant or even productive force in confrontations with commercially produced messages. Such analyses assumed primacy for consumptive processes and argued for consumer power as audiences encountered institutional messages in dominant culture. For example, de Certeau (2000 [1984]), and similarly Fiske (2000 [1989]) and Mort (2000 [1982]), argued that consumption allowed for the possibility of oppositional readings in communicative practices of everyday life (p. 162). In de Certeau's view, people could produce subversive meanings in their consumptive encounters with (and interpretations of) messages from dominant culture. Influenced by de Certeau, Fiske similarly argued that consumption enables an audience to "poach…the structure, pluralizing meanings and resisting discipline" (p. 284; see also Jenkins 1992). Fiske suggested that consumption's many possible meanings ensured consumers of opportunities to subvert hegemonic social order (p. 285). From a somewhat different focus on identity, Mort argued that consumption enables people to resist as they create identities in communicative processes (2000 [1982], p. 276). Other, recent efforts try to redefine production in terms of consumption through adopting new conceptual metaphors to describe the communication process. For example, Silverstone suggests that consumption itself is not a passive using up of something, but itself a kind of transformative work (Silverstone 1990, p. 181; see also Bennett 1996). As is clear in each of these examples, production and consumption are seen as linked, but still essentially separate processes or fields of enquiry, with consumption assumed to be an essential and expedient starting point for understanding the exercise of power through communication.

In contrast to studies that emphasize resistance at the expense of its determinations, others from a broader array of fields seek to work with a generally defined dialectical approach not unlike that undergirding work by the Frankfurt School. Such scholarship moves beyond a linear and unified conceptualization of production-/consumption-based logic and theorizes instead the dynamic mutual constitution of the two. For example, Fine and Leopold argue that productive processes in communication and consumers' interpretations of those processes operate within interdependent, mutually constitutive and dynamic relations that become meaningful within historically-situated social environments and lived practices (1993, p. 15, 28). Storey similarly maps cultural consumption and everyday life to identify consumption as a process in which (to paraphrase) people articulate both creative freedom to make culture and dependence on the culture industries, which provide both the means and the conditions of cultural activity (1999, p. xi). Adapting Marx's oft-noted observation, Storey argues that "people make culture as a result of conditions and commodities they do not make" (p. xii). Thus, in Storey's model, consuming what is produced (whether in communicative processes or otherwise) also produces culture in a dynamic and mutually constitutive interaction (p. 160).

Further attempts to push the rethinking of the division between production and consumption can be seen, first, in studies that, instead of talking about the transmission of content and/or meaning, talk about the process as one of depersonalized circulation. A particularly earnest attempt can be seen in the work of Hebdige (2000 [1988]). In his analysis of consumers' confrontation with the Italian motor scooter, he describes production and consumption as historically-contingent, interrelated, and changing "moments." As he explains, an "absolute symmetry between 'moments' of design/production and consumption/use" becomes impossible to find when confronting the moments as they interact in lived experience.

Rather, production and consumption dominate in meaning inception at different historical junctures through a process he terms "circulation." Within this process, meanings are "made" through constant appropriation and transformation. Thus, discussing production and consumption only makes sense metaphorically because their actual practice is too difficult to separate and isolate. Analyses that essentialize production and consumption as mutually exclusive categories and/or loci of power cannot fully explain communication processes because they retain reality-distorting categorical assumptions. By contrast, communicative processes become intelligible only when explored "within a nexus of political issues and cultural codes which are historically particular" (Hebdige 2000 [1988], pp. 128-130).

A second recent attempt to push further the rethinking of production and consumption comes from attempts to re-map the collapsing and shifting nature of heretofore taken-for-granted boundaries between production and consumption. One way this is done is via Bourdieu's work on the growing importance of symbolic production as a means of social control in post-1960s industrial societies. He focuses on the work done by "cultural intermediaries": cultural workers such as those in the advertising and design industries who don't so much originate or create meaning as transfer it (or, after Hebdige, circulate it) from one realm to another or seek to bestow a product or practice with a new or different set of meanings (Bourdieu 1984; Lane 2000, p. 157-158). To develop this notion of cultural intermediary in more detail, Negus and colleagues in a variety of work draw upon Bourdieu and other theorists (among them the Frankfurt School) in their effort to refine and develop these complexities (Negus and du Gay 1994; du Gay 1997, pp. 181-216; Negus 1998; Negus 1999).

Yet, it's one thing to say that the relations between production and consumption are complex, and quite another to say that production and consumption, as analytic categories, must be themselves subjected to critical questioning. Thus, despite the value in complicating linear, sequential conceptualizations of production/consumption, these efforts still grapple insufficiently with the power relationships that arise and change in communication practices and with the categorical assumptions retained in employing the concepts of producers and consumers themselves. Rather than grappling with these theoretical issues, such studies end up making the case that the relations between the two categories/stages/moments are either more complex than has often been thought, or are forged by a new class of cultural worker.

A serial debate between self-styled representatives of "political economy" and "cultural studies" (Ferguson and Golding 1997; Hagen and Wasko 2000)—for all its circularity and redundancy—pursues and related points even more fully. A set of statements that appeared in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* in 1995 is a particularly good example of how, in the midst of polemical overstatements and bad-tempered responses, some valuable discussion emerges which sheds more light on this issue.

In one essay in this 1995 set, Garnham castigates a seemingly unified and orthodox "cultural studies" for valorizing the pleasures of consumption while ignoring the transnational operation of capital and how it perpetuates dominant relations. Yet he also emphasizes that political economy is not just about factories and products, but ultimately about "collaborative social forms" as the "key characteristic of production" (Garnham 1995, p. 64). Thus, "production" as defined by this political economist deals ultimately with the organization of society, not solely (as critics in their parodies charge) about how many widgets are made, who makes them, and who makes money from them.

In a response to Garnham's piece, Grossberg ignores this subtle point, castigating a seemingly unified and orthodox political economy for its "narrow and abstract conception of production" (Grossberg 1995, p. 74). However, elaborating on this, he makes a similar point, but more explicitly, about the historical instead of essential nature of "production."

> If the very notion and practice of production are themselves culturally produced, and if the relations between production and consumption are more complex and less stable than Garnham suggests, then the model of cultural analysis based in a separation of production and consumption is itself problematic, as is the reduction of production to waged labor (which ignores what Marx himself had pointed out: the production involved in consumption/reproduction) (Grossberg 1995, p. 74).

Buried in the reductions and the polemics is the central recognition that concepts and theories are historical, and thus require critical attention rather than habitual acceptance. The more "given" a concept is, the more necessary it is to pry it loose from habit and replace it within history. It is this recognition that provides a way of recovering an alternative to the uncritical acceptance of production/consumption and all that it means in communication research.

Encoding and decoding Marx

In an illuminating interview, Stuart Hall and others (Hall et al. 1994) excavate Hall's influential "encoding/decoding model" (Hall 1980). Despite tedious, abstract probes by panelists into the "correctness" or "completeness" of the model, the interview opens with Hall's much more valuable account of the historical context of the writing of the essay. Rather than being an effort to construct a timeless model, Hall reminds the panelists that it was composed and presented in response to such research modes as "traditional empirical, positivistic models of content analysis, [and] audience-effects survey research" as were current at the institution (the Centre for Mass Communications Research at the University of Leicester) at which he presented the initial paper. In particular, the encoding/decoding model was "positioned against a certain unilinearity… [in the view in which] the sender originates the message, the message itself is pretty unidimensional, and the receiver receives it" (Hall et al. 1994, p. 253).

Among the various political and theoretical contexts Hall identifies is the crucial one (for the purposes of this essay) of a debate about Marxism, and in particular, of critiques Althusser levied toward Marx's production/consumption model. By contrast to Althusser's critique of a rigidly determinist model, Hall finds Marx's earlier work more nuanced, locating in particular "a very interesting model which I think has not been sufficiently understood: a model which is elaborated from the notion of circuits of production." Of central importance to Hall was how it suggests an ongoing articulation between moments of production, consumption, realization, and reproduction instead of one-way, periodized transmission with a beginning and end. Mentioned in passing during this exchange is perhaps the most crucial insight of all. As Hall notes, "if you read the '1857 Introduction' carefully, you will see that he [Marx] says consumption determines production just as production determines consumption" (Hall et al. 1994, pp. 254-255).

Indeed, as Marx wrote in this essay (1970 [1857]), the point about the nature and relationship of production and consumption is both more subtle and more concrete. Although he is not writing specifically about culture and communication, one must keep in mind that he is talking about general human activity in the world, however it may be exercised and enacted.

In a somewhat lengthy passage, Marx explores the relationship between production/consumption, thus providing a useful introduction to his complex argument:

> Production leads to consumption, for which it provides the material; consumption without production would have no object. But consumption also leads to production by providing for its products the subject for whom they are products. The product only attains its final consummation in consumption. A railway on which no one travels, which is therefore not used up, not consumed, is potentially but not actually a railway. Without production there is no consumption, but without consumption there is no production either, since in that case production would be useless. (Marx 1970 [1857], p. 196)

In Marx's view, consumption actuates production and perpetuates new production through providing its "pre-condition." Consumption thus relegates to production a conceptual object that determines production in providing it purpose (i.e. internal needs or desires) for which production creates products (pp. 196-197). Within the same process, production supplies the consumptive object (without which consumption could not occur) and thus "produces consumption" (p. 197). In this way, production/consumption "finish" the other, producing a "distinct form" in which they are both historically possible and recognizable (p. 197).

Marx then argues that both production and consumption are possible because of the particular historical conditions in which they operate and become identifiable as they mutually constitute and determine each other. Within production, for example, the object produced for consumption "is not simply an object in general, but a particular object which must be consumed in a particular way, a way determined by production" (p. 197). Marx illustrates this point with the notion of hunger. As he explains, "Hunger is hunger; but the hunger that is satisfied by cooked meat eaten with knife and fork differs from hunger that devours raw meat with the help of hands, nails and teeth" (p. 197). Production thus produces the particular modes in which consumption takes place and, consequently, produces particular kinds of consumers and consumer needs. By extension, consumption produces the particular "predisposition of the producer" operating in production (emphasis original, p. 198). Thus, to elaborate further his example of hunger, the consumptive act of using knife and fork to eat meat, and thus the consumer's conceptual adherence to a particular view of using utensils in the act of eating, in turn governs the production of utensils to use while eating. Such utensils are produced in specific ways and toward this specific purpose only in light of their use in consumption.

Marx clarifies that, despite the mutually constitutive relationship characterizing production/consumption, the two also "remain extrinsic to each other," with production providing the external objects for consumption and consumption providing internal conceptual purpose or objects for production. Within the production/consumption process, then, the moments are distinct, even as each moment "creates the other" and simultaneously "creates itself as the other" (p. 198).

Thus, what we see explored 150 years ago to a much greater degree than today is a dialectical relationship between production and consumption. On the one hand, they must be recognized as distinct. To do otherwise would be to impute the same power and ability to a single person as to, for example, a corporation. Yet, they must also at the same time be recognized as identical, in that they both consist of human activity enabled by, within, and through particular social organizations, as well as mutually constitutive, in that one does not exist without the other. With these recognitions, the issue about the comparative power of producers and consumers is thus decentered from being concerned with individuals, their intentions, their individual actions, and the effects of specific messages in favor of a focus on the making and maintenance of forms and relationships which prescribe, encourage, and delimit certain kinds of social action and processes.

Elaboration in materialist cultural theories

As argued above, the issue underlying much debate about communication concerns the comparative power of producers vis-à-vis consumers. Yet, what is rarely if ever questioned is the whole host of distinctions—such as between "producer" and "consumer"—upon which these debates rely and that are taken as obvious, naturally occurring, and thus beyond question. By virtue of "hard-wiring" such distinctions into communication research, relevant research is conducted within the general rubric of "media influence," addressing variations of questions about the relation between these supposedly distinct entities (Dickinson et al. 1998, pp. xi-xiv).

Although in the "1857 Introduction" Marx is writing about the relations of production of goods in capitalist economies, this insight about the dialectical constitution and social relations involved in production and consumption has become a cornerstone in others' elaborations of materialist cultural theories. If heretofore distinct phases of production and consumption are both recognized as requiring human work and effort, with neither passive nor always determined in comparison to the other, with communication as a continual appropriation and transformation of meanings and materials in specific historical contexts, the relevance of questions about the comparative power of producers and consumers dissolves.

Questioning the basic relevance of these taken-for-granted distinctions is the key entry point of critique for a wide range of materialist positions. Despite an exceptional diversity in emphases, and formative contributions from but not limited to diverse sources such as Marxism, poststructuralism, feminism, postcolonial studies, interpretive anthropology, postmodernism, and cultural sociology, a materialist orientation broadly conceived addresses the process by which distinctions such as production and consumption are not natural, but themselves generated both through theory as well as through historical processes (Hardt 1992). In a recent overview, Haslett (2000) notes how materialist theories of culture reject easy distinctions between producer and consumer, ideas and material conditions, media and society, seeing instead how each is constituted by the other, thus comprising a social totality as a complex of determinations that can only be analyzed in historically specific (as opposed to timeless and universal) ways (Haslett 2000, pp. 15-49; see also Jay 1984, and Anderson 1984).

For example, Williams (1977) emphasizes the relevance of materialism for cultural theory. Accepting "producers" and "consumers" as empirical, naturally occurring entities neglects how industries as well as audiences are together constituted and practiced through conceptions of what a media system is supposed to be (Williams 1973; see also Streeter 1996). Although recent (and not-so-recent) theorizing about the complex ways in which audiences and producers affect each other marks a substantial advance over a one-way linear model of communication as a transmission of messages from producers to consumers, such efforts still view communication as a way of connecting producers with consumers rather than as a process by which such roles and their relationships are constituted (Gans 1957; Alasuutari 1999).

In contrast (and to paraphrase Williams), if the process of communication is seen as productive (instead of simply connective), as the making of meanings and values (not simply their reflection and transmission), in the general social process of signification and communication, it no longer makes any sense at all to think of communication as composed of relations between essentialized producers and consumers (Williams 1977, p. 100). Rather than a linear, decontextualized study of the impact of discrete messages on individuals, a materialist perspective advocates the assessment of a practice in terms of how social knowledge is made and enacted and how specific conditions enable or constrain its operation (Williams 1973). Instead of seeking to detect the extent to which a message's ostensibly unitary meaning is transferred from sender to receiver, the study of communication thus becomes an effort to understand the production and maintenance of social orders that define, constitute, enable, and delimit human action in the world.

Critical theory and history

An important buttress of media-effects research is the lack of scholarly attention paid to the determinant relationships between theory, method, results, and historical contexts. By recovering these relationships, premises that undergird such approaches—such as the separation between producer and consumer—are transformed from essential, universal, given features of the natural world into historical concepts.

How such a theoretical recognition is deployed in specific studies is potentially as varied as the perspectives which take a broadly conceived materialist position. Yet, despite their immense variety and differences, critical approaches together seek to historicize and thus expose taken-for-granted truths, subjecting them to revision and change. Although sometimes seen as an exercise is negativity (criticizing without offering something in its place), this historicization constitutes the basic productive value of a critical approach. It seeks to continually remake ways in which communication and society can be thought, while also reminding us of both the provisionality of such ways of thinking and of the necessity to remain open to others. By doing this, critical inquiry remakes and renews possibilities for change.

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C√CS

Title: Joseph Conrad's Hearts of Darkness, and The New York Times Narratives of HIV/AIDS in Africa: A continuum of "Ideologeme of Imperial Contagion" or A co-incidence?
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Western governments, particularly former colonists share unique relationships with former colonized places. These relationships are manifested in different sectors ranging from economic co-operation to cultural exchanges. However, such a scheme does not suggest an equality of partnership. Instead there are several demonstrated ways in which the West has taken advantage of its former colonial regions. This exploitation can be seen not only in economic and material artifacts but also intellectually – which in my opinion was the most clever aspect of the whole colonization era – the reality of penetrating colonized peoples' psyche and making these people believe that what the colonizer thought of them is who they are.

The global mass media, controlled by Western corporations, play a significant role in this penetration. Thus, for the news/entertainment consumer, there are definition of "others" who are not like "us". Usually, "others" are described in these media by stereotyping and exaggerations which imply inferiority.

Therefore, I argue in the following passages that the style of reporting done by The New York Times on the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa between 1985 and 1990 reflected an ongoing literary style that can be attributed to Conrad's Heart of Darkness.

R 1:

When viewed from an international communication perspective, what was the comparative treatment of the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa by The New York Times? What themes, appeals, and assumptions appear in that news?

A qualitative research approach is an appropriate method for the analysis of the data collected for this project. This method enables a comprehensive or detailed analysis of the data. Furthermore, the nature of the data collected naturally lends itself to a qualitative rather than a quantitative analysis.

Textual Analysis

Textual analysis according to Hansen, et. al. (1998) seeks to discover what occurs where, in which context, discussed in which terms, using which vocabulary or terminology, and the relationships and differences.

Additionally, vocabulary and lexical analytic method is applied to the data as part of textual analysis. This method may offer more insight in to the rhetorical posture of the press because it allows for the analysis of symbolic meaning of words. Using a lexical approach to examine headlines of press reporting on race for instance, Van Djik (1991) observed that:

> Words manifest the underlying semantic concepts used in the definition of the situation. Lexicalization of the semantic content, however, is never neutral: the choice of one word rather than another to express more or less the same meaning, or to denote the same referent, may signal the opinions, emotions, or social position of a speaker. . . Not only do they (words in newspaper headlines) express definition of the situation, but they also signal the social or political opinion of the newspaper about the events. That is, headlines not only globally define or summarize an event, they also evaluate it. Hence, the lexical style of headlines has ideological implications. (p. 53).

This approach is useful especially when analyzing news reports from Western countries and supports empiricist methods that seek to explain trends of reporting in the mass media

Frames and Themes

Within this framework, news articles will be categorized into themes and frames. This approach is useful because it reveals different major elements in the news discourse. According to Altheid (1996), "communication and media formats enable us to recognize various frames that give general definition of what is before us" (p.30). Gamson and Modigliani (1989: 3) have noted that:

> media discourse can be conceived of as a set of interpretive packages that give meaning to an issue. A package has an internal structure. At its core is a central organizing idea, or *frame*, for making sense of relevant events, suggesting what is at issue . . . This frame typically implies a range of positions, rather than any single one, allowing for a degree of controversy among those who share a common frame (in Tuchman, 1991; p.89).

Goffman (1974) has also referred to frames as a "schematic of interpretation ... which enable people to locate, perceive, identify, and label 'occurrences of information'" (p.55). Frames focus on what will be discussed, how it will be discussed, and above all, how it will not be discussed. In short, frames are the focus, a parameter or boundary, for discussing a particular event (Altheid, 1996). Additionally, Entman (1993) suggests that:

> Framing essentially involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described (p.52).

Themes on the other hand are general definitions or interpretive frames; they are the recurring typical theses that run through several reports (Altheid, 1996).

Frames

Consistent with the research method proposed here, a closer examination of the data collected reveal two broad frames in which the AIDS discourse was constructed in The New York Times. These include:

(a) The Origin of AIDS

(b) The Social Impact of AIDS

These two frames are not mutually exclusive, but rather, are often intermixed in the discourse of AIDS as international news. In addition, several themes emerge within each frame. These themes within the framework outlined above are useful in understanding the discourse of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in The New York Times.

Total Number of Articles collected (1985-1990), N = 49

Origin of HIV/AIDS.

Most scholars and scientists agree that the origin of HIV/AIDS is unknown. However the accounts of the origin of AIDS in the Western press do not reflect this consensus.

Instead, consciously or not, these accounts point the finger toward or blame Africa as the source and origin of the pandemic. This approach by the Western press follows a literary trend as old as the relationship between the Africa and the West. Ungar (1985) points out that from the earliest references in literature, both scholarly and popular, the African continent suffered from the vision of "darkest Africa" – a place of savages, jungles and chaos.

In addition, the ideas about Africans' closeness to "natural life," their similarities to apes and other dark animals, their tendency toward promiscuous sex and other sins fueled the negative perception of the continent in the West and hence, the ethnocentric and often racist attitude found in Western publications about Africa. To this, Herskovits (1961) noted that Africa's "people were held to have fallen behind in the march of progress, with ways of life representing early stages in the evolution of human civilization."

Therefore, the association of black people with dirt, disease, ignorance and an animal-like promiscuity has in no way been eradicated as evidenced in the reports about the origin of AIDS and its direct linkage to Africa in the Western press.

The Animal Link

For reasons that will be made clear here, Western scientists and their presses scrambled to the African continent in search of clues to the origin of AIDS even though the virus was first diagnosed in the West. The quest to discover the cause of the disease led to the publication in Western newspapers, including The New York Times, of unsubstantiated information regarding the origin of AIDS. It seemed that no matter how ridiculous the story was, as long as a scientist could be found to back it up, or speculate on it, it was written and published; furthermore, if the story was said to have occurred somewhere in Africa, it was credible and fit to print. A story is further legitimized for printing if it appears as a publication in a scientific journal.

The New York Times published two stories specifically addressing the issue of the origin of AIDS. The first story appeared on March 7, 1986. It was titled "Link to AIDS Is Seen In Virus Affecting Pigs." According to the writer:

> An African virus that causes a disease in pigs that resembles AIDS may have been present in some American AIDS patients, according to a new study. Evidence of infection with African swine fever virus was found in 9 of 21 American AIDS patients tested, according to the study to be published in The Lancet , a British medical journal. The study challenges the belief that acquired immune deficiency syndrome is caused solely by the virus HTLV-III. "I don't think we're trying to say that HTLV-III is out and A.S.F.V. is in" as the cause of AIDS, John Beldekas, a researcher at the Boston College School of Medicine, and principal author of the study, said. "What we are saying is that AIDS is complicated. It can't be explained solely by HTLV-III." Jane Teas, a former cancer researcher, suggested in a letter to the Lancet in 1983 that African swine fever virus might have some link to AIDS. She had learned that an epidemic of swine fever had occurred in Haiti about the same time that AIDS was discovered there.

The claim made by this research team proved unreliable as their hypothesis of the link between a virus that afflicted pigs and the AIDS virus in man could not be proven. However, the issue here is that the pig virus was African. Would this team have come to their conclusion if the same virus was, say, Irish or Italian? And the suggestion that because an epidemic of swine fever had occurred in Haiti about the same time that AIDS was discovered there is just too simplistic an explanation then, and now. It would be equivalent to stating that the AIDS virus was caused by the Mad Cow disease that killed several people in England, assuming for instance, that the virus was discovered in England when Mad Cow struck.

The reality, of course, is that the virus that causes Mad Cow and the AIDS virus are completely different, and do not interchange for one another. The same logic holds for the pig virus and the AIDS virus. AIDS patients have been known to have other viruses such as the hepatitis B virus. Additionally, the mention of the African pig virus and Haiti may be characterized as an attempt to link these two places together as the possible sources of the AIDS virus, especially since these two locales were accused of harboring the AIDS virus.

In another report published on August 27, 1986, Erik Eckholm writing for The New York Times, informs readers of a discovery by French scientists. The article titled "French Scientists Report Discovery of AIDS Virus in African insects" begins as thus:

> Specimen of numerous insects from central Africa have been found to contain the AIDS virus according to French scientists, who stressed that despite the discovery, transmission to AIDS to humans from insects was extremely unlikely. Other scientists called the discovery a puzzling one, if confirmed, could yield new insights into the virus that causes acquired immune deficiency syndrome. But some were skeptical, noting that mistakes could be made in the process used to establish the virus's presence.

Eckholm, by initially reporting the findings, and noting the doubt of other scientists to the insect link of HIV infection in humans, succeeds to a certain extent in warning his audience about the potential dubiousness of the findings. But he, like other Western writers, follows the same pattern of indiscriminate negative generalization about Africa as the title of the article suggests, and as we shall see below. He continues:

> Genetic material from the AIDS virus was found integrated into the DNA, or genetic structure, of insects from Zaire and the Central African Republic, Dr. Jean-Claude Chermann of the Pasteur Institute said yesterday in a telephone interview from Paris. He said the material had been found in mosquitoes, cockroaches, tsetse flies, and ant-lions from Zaire, and only in mosquitoes, ticks, and bedbugs from the central African Republic. Dr. Chermann said that the finding raised intriguing questions but that no evidence so far indicated that the virus reproduce inside the insects. He agreed with American experts who said disease patterns in Africa and elsewhere showed that AIDS was not spread by insects.

The actual report as can be seen, contradicts the headline that introduces it, even by the admission of the key French scientist involved. Additionally, Central Africa Republic and Zaire do not constitute Africa as the reporter and the scientist would have us believe. Dr. Chermann, the French scientist claimed in the article, that "roaches might have picked up the virus form blood or *excrement, and other insects might have picked it up by biting humans."* Granted, if blood-sucking insects were transmitting AIDS in Africa, then there should have been more far more cases in children of school age, farmers, the elderly, street vendors, and even tourists from all over who vacation or go on safaris in the said areas.

American scientists did not venture as far as testing insects for the virus that causes AIDS. According to Dr. Harold Jaffe of the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta who was quoted in the article, "the virus is very selective in the type of cells it infects." "Puzzled" by this discovery, he points out that scientists in laboratories had not been able to infect any living animals with the AIDS virus except for chimpanzees, and "if epidemiological studies gave us any hint at all that insects played a role in spreading AIDS, we'd do more detailed studies, but they haven't."

Furthermore, an unnamed scientist in the article rightly points out that "the fact that nearly all the insect specimens from Zaire showed sign of AIDS infection was ground for suspecting that an error might have occurred" Again we see an example of 'scientific' speculation overriding sound news judgement. The question here is, what valuable information does this article hope to impart on the reader? A suggestion that African insects are AIDS virus carriers, and French and American insects are not, as the scientist claims?

The writer, Eckholm, continues with a general overview of modes and patterns of infection between Western countries and Africa.

> In the United States and Europe," he writes, "the disease is most prevalent among homosexual men and intravenous drug users and their sex partners and babies. More than 24,000 Americans have been diagnosed with AIDS since the affliction was first discovered in 1981; more than half have died. In Africa, men and women are affected almost equally and the disease often strikes adults who have had multiple sex partners, leading experts to believe that heterosexual intercourse is the main route of spread there.

Here, we are reminded of who is more likely to be infected with the AIDS virus – homosexuals and IV drug users in the West, and sexually active men and women in Africa – the marginalized folks in the Western press with regards to HIV/AIDS. Meanwhile, it had been established that HIV/AIDS could be transmitted heterosexually even in the West as it could elsewhere when Eckholm went to press with this article in 1986. He concludes by quoting the French scientist's opinion of how African insects might have contracted the AIDS virus, and how they transmit it to humans.

According to this perspective, the scientist, Dr. Chermann, "speculated that roaches might have picked up the virus form blood or excrement, and other insects might have picked it up by biting infected humans." This same scientist is quoted earlier in the article as saying that "Even if the virus could reproduce in insects, or if the virus could live in the human blood stored within an insect between bites, it is likely that the quantities spread from insect bites would be too small to infect humans... the epidemiological data argue strongly against any transmission by insects." This statement obviously contradicts the one preceding it, but the issue here is not the scientist's claim per se, but rather, the judgement of the journalist and his publisher who deemed the information valuable enough as news for public consumption.

Insects have lived on this planet as long as man has, if not longer. And insects have been co-existing with humans, and biting us and other animals that we often eat as food.

However, it seems that during this period, any story with reference to African origin of the virus that causes AIDS was newsworthy, regardless of how bizarre the story might have been. This approach serves no public utility, but rather reinforces the deeply held negative stereotypes about the continent and her people. In addition, the fact that such stories were being published in the prestigious presses of the West makes these reports more and more likely to be believed.

Social Impact of HIV/AIDS.

The social impact of AIDS is another frame that is explored by reporters of The New York Times regarding cases of AIDS in Africa. Within this context, several themes emerge. These themes include the human interest focus of the AIDS story, economic ramifications, and political implications. These themes are interconnected and together they reflect a holistic view of the African society.

According to Sociologist Robert Park who wrote fifty years ago in his introduction to Helen MacGill Hughe's classic analysis, human interest "... gives the news the character of a story that will be read for its own sake, even when the reader is not at all concerned with it as news ... It is the ability to discover and interpret human interest in the news that gives the reporter the character of a literary artist and the news story the character of literature." (p.xxi). To this end, journalists in all aspects of the news media have often responded to the AIDS epidemic by looking for faces behind the statistics. The New York Times was no exception to this approach.

The New York Times published a four-part series entitled "AIDS in Africa: A Killer Rages On" – with a sub-title, "A Continent's Agony."

The appeal, structure, journalistic style, themes, and message in this series begins with descriptions of the landscape that renders it with exotic qualities – a sort of "establishing shot" to orient the readers to primitive settings where the action takes place.

Similarly, there are the statistics of AIDS victims, dead or alive, and future infection projections. Then, there is the human interest angle in which a detailed description of the ordeal of some AIDS victims, along with their pictures are presented. Both series contain accounts of deteriorated medical facilities, and incompetent governments who were still in denial about AIDS as well as reports of how Western experts are striving to rescue Africa from the deadly virus. The emerging news appeal suggests a call to ideal social order within the international community by journalists because they presume that, if not contained, the AIDS virus would spread to other regions of the world.

A review of the remaining stories in The New York Times revealed no new patterns of construction with a few exceptions, such as the third article in the four part series entitled "With 'Social Marketing,' Condoms Combat AIDS." John Tierney, The New York Times correspondent filed the following report:

> Vangu Tsumbu, a former auto-parts salesman, arrived a recent morning to distribute condoms for one of Africa's most successful AIDS-prevention programs. He came as part missionary, part capitalist – a promising blend in disrepute around here since Joseph Conrad found the "Heart of Darkness" near the waterfall.
>
> It was a century ago, in September 1890, that Conrad reached the end of the line on the 1,000-mile trip up the Congo river. He came here to retrieve a dying man named Klein, an ivory agent for a Belgian company that claimed to be working solely for the "moral and material regeneration" of the jungle's natives.
>
> **'Vilest Scramble for Loot'**
>
> Conrad saw it differently. He stood on his steamer's deck at night smoking a pipe, listening to the waterfall and morosely reflecting as he later recalled, on "the vilest scramble for loot ever to disfigure the history of human conscience."
>
> In his story, the company's inner station became the "Heart of Darkness" and Klein became Kurtz, the proselytizer from the International Society for the suppression of Savage Customs who turns into Congo's most zealous ivory collector. He takes to decorating the station with the sculls of uncooperative natives, which even his profit-conscious regional manager finally acknowledges to be "unsound method."

The main focus of this article was to describe a technique used for AIDS prevention through the distribution of condoms to villages on the Congo river. Vangu Tsumbu the distributor is the main character in the story. However, one must pause and question the inclusion of Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" as a comparative element to Vangu's activities in the narration of the story.

It seems the reporter had found a real life example to substitute for the fictional characters in Conrad's work. And his elation from this find caused him to drift back into the most infamous degradation ever accorded to a continent and her people in history, as exemplified in the Heart of Darkness.

As if to redeem himself from his illusion, the correspondent added:

> Mr. Vangu, who reached Klein's riverbank by airplane and a dugout canoe, brought a more refined technique for inducing behavioral change.

It is quite obvious that Tierney could have written his report on Mr. Vangu's activities without resorting to the shallow comparisons, and mixing fact and fiction. The appeal to the audience is clear: this is an updated version of an old story, the environment and people have not changed in 100 years. And to support this argument, there is a picture of Vangu in his canoe with a caption that read:

> Vangu Tsumbu is part missionary and part capitalist, selling condoms for one of Africa's most successful AIDS prevention

> programs. Mr. Vangu, holding a bag at the center, recently passed out samples to boatmen in a dugout canoe on the Congo River near the spot where Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" was set.

This type of reporting by Western journalists as evidenced in the ongoing analysis is not done by accident. It is not being suggested here that the Western journalists whose articles are used for analytical purposes in this paper are racists, rather, what is being revealed here is that these modern journalists unconsciously or otherwise, use a literary style that dates back to the colonial periods in their description of AIDS in Africa.

Historically, the accounts of AIDS in Africa in the Western press under observation here are rooted in the "*ideologeme of scenic contamination,*" i.e. an ideological value, opinion, or prejudice often manifested in the form of protonarratives (Jameson,1981, p.87). Ideologies according to Van Dijk (1991) are seen as "interpretation framework" that "organizes sets of attitudes" about other elements of modern society. Ideologies, therefore, provide the "cognitive foundation" for attitudes of various groups in societies, as well as the furtherance of their own goal and interests (Dellinger, 1995)

During the colonial period, imperialists viewed foreign lands as active forces capable not only of resisting attempts to reshape them but also of exerting a baleful influence on those who would make the attempt. Thus imperialism was touted as a defensive measure designed to control and hold at bay the unpredictable forces inherent in these lands, and thereby minimizing the risk to those laboring on the empire's behalf.

Scenic contamination therefore personalizes alien environments or landscapes in order to depict such "scenes" as potential threats to the physical (and moral) well-being of the imperialists. (Bass, 1998).

While the underlying text of contamination may be just as racist as that of contamination by "others," it nevertheless allows racism "to remain conveniently invisible, disseminated throughout the texture of social life and thus 'naturalized' as custom, habit, spontaneous practice" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 116).

White (1978) has noted that the stigmatization of cultural "others" as sources of disease contamination generally involves an overtly racist projection of images of filth and defilement onto the subject population, usually for the purpose of validating the "purity" of the imperial race. Thus, the racial segregation of populations (as was the practice in British India and Africa) was justified in the name of protecting the "health" (both physical and moral) of imperial administrators and bureaucrats.

The logic of scenic contamination is still relevant and can be applied in the interpretation of modern texts that deal with viral outbreaks in non-Western lands. Scenic contamination in this context functions on an insidious as opposed to an overt level.

According to Bass (1998), the idea of scenic contamination has long been a common organizing principle in discourse seeking to describe the relationship between the nations of the West and those of the Third World. Perhaps unwittingly, these texts use the conventions associated with this idea in their descriptions of emerging viruses such as AIDS. In turn, these conventions enable them to "frame" the idea of disease transmission in a particular way (p.432).

Within this context, the AIDS story fit the profile of "risk" or "hazard" discourse and provides an example of the manner in which science writers, publicists, and scientists themselves have sought to provide a symbolic legitimization for science via the "unscientific" vehicle of narrative.

In this regard, all employ common elements of this tradition, commented on by various rhetorical critics, such as stressing the positive nature and need for scientific research and portraying scientists in a heroic fashion as humanity's front line of defense against those natural forces that would threaten us (Lessl, 1985; Nelkin, 1987; Hornig, 1989).

However, Bass (1998) has argued that these accounts go far beyond the legitimization of science in their efforts to advance interpretations regarding the nature of the underdeveloped regions of the world; the relationship between viral diseases and these regions; and the relationship between such regions and the technologically advanced nations of the United States and Western Europe. Therefore, these interpretations are not value-free conclusions drawn from objectively-based, scientific observation, but rather are attitudes drawn from the narrative conventions of scenic contamination.

In protonarratives of scenic contamination, the scenes' active nature is first identified metonymically with some negative human quality-i.e., the equation of "savagery" or "barbarism" with "the jungle," "unnatural desire" with the "tropics," "unforgiving" and "brutal" with "the desert," etc. Within such an environment, native peoples do not function as independent agents in their own right; rather, they are relegated to secondary roles and their natures are presented as being derived from the environment itself. Just as such a scene reduces indigenous inhabitants to being little more than derivations of itself, so is it capable of working its insidious influence on outsiders (Bass, 1998).

Writing for the December 8, 1985 edition of The New York Times for instance, Lawrence K. Altman, M.D., recounted his past and present experiences in Africa:

> It was twenty years ago and I was an epidemiologist leading an immunization campaign in West Africa. The refrigerators aboard the trucks we drove carrying vaccines to villages at *the edge of the Sahara would not work in the 100 degree heat.* When an official of the sponsoring Agency for International Development in Washington learned about this, he suggested that we park the trucks in the shade.
>
> From the window of the American Embassy in Ouagadougu, Upper Volta, (now Burkina Fasso) where I read his cable, *I gazed over the expansive shrub-dotted savannah in absolute wonder. Where was I going to find this wonderful shade* ? To make a point, I telegraphed home for an emergency shipment of 10,000 Dutch elm trees.
>
> The trees, it may not be hard to imagine, did not come. *And we stumbled along as well as we could in our campaign against*

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> *measles, which for some unknown reason was, and is, particularly severe in Africa.*
>
> Eventually, our team from the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta turned our efforts, along with many others, to combating smallpox, whose ultimate eradication in Africa and elsewhere became a milestone in medical history. And the eradication raised hope that by freeing third world countries from a major killer, these countries could improve their economies and health care and then go on to tackle other pressing problems.
>
> Now, on returning to Africa as a medical reporter for The New York Times, *I am reminded of what I often heard on my first trip: "Africa always offers something new." And indeed, a new menace, AIDS, confronts much of the continent now*. If the number of cases continues to rise unabated, and if effective prevention and treatments are not found soon, AIDS might become as much as a scourge in Africa as smallpox once was.

Sections of the quote above have been emphasized to demonstrate the adaptation of ideologeme of scenic contamination in the article. Following this logic, Africa remains a source of pollution and contamination as suggested in Conrad's jungle. Thus, the doctor's agreement with what he had "often heard" that "Africa always offers something new," confirms the long-standing perception of Africa as a birth place of new diseases, including AIDS. Hence, by means of age-old stereotypical conventions of scenic contamination, Africa is portrayed as a source of pollution and an object to be quarantined and controlled.

Within this construct, the centuries-old process of cross-cultural transmission of disease appears as the most recent site of struggle between nations of the West and those of the Third World, and accounts of disease transmission become but one of the many "residues" of imperial thinking that continue to exist "in a kind of general cultural sphere as well as in political, economic, ideological, and social practices" (Said, p.9).

In protonarratives of scenic contamination, the imperial "ideals" of spreading justice, converting the heathen, and honestly acquiring wealth, represented in the person of the imperial agent, become infused with the negative qualities embodied by a malevolent environment. The result is an unholy abomination or hybrid that perverts the idea of empire, the identity of the imperial agent, and, in extreme cases, his very humanity (Bass, 1988).

There exists however, a diachronic adaptation of the ideologeme of scenic contamination. This is manifested in the difference in perception between imperialists of the past and their contemporary counterparts of the underdeveloped world. Thus, for imperial agents such as Conrad, the alien world of the empire was a stationary one. For one to be affected by this world, he or she must experience it directly. In this context for example, Kurtz, Conrad's main character in The Heart of Darkness could not have suffered the dehumanizing effects of the African environment had he not traveled there. In other words, one could not be infected by a malevolent environment unless one went there. (Bass, 1998).

On the other hand, Connelly and Kennedy (1994) have posited that in the modern West, the underdeveloped world is seen less as a stationary location than as movement. Within this context, Said (1993) observes that scenes of mass protests in the Third World and worldwide migrations of the refugees of conflicts, "undocumented immigrants," and the "starving populations of the Southern Hemisphere have all challenged basic understandings to art and theory of government, the principle of confinement" (pp. 326-7).

Therefore, unlike Conrad's jungle which was stationary, Africa in modern times can now reach the rest of the world through its agents of contagion, like lethal viruses such as AIDS, and infect it with its primeval savagery. This observation lends credibility to the position here that the Western press assumed the appeal posture of international community guardians, that sought to preserve an international ideal social order, through a reporting style whose goal was to alert the rest of the world of the impending invasion by African HIV carriers.

Theoretically, the appeal of ideal social order coupled with the concept of ideologeme of imperial contagion within a framework of International news analysis as has been shown here are reflections or products of socialization and institutional practices. Within this context, I do not assume as has been indicated earlier that there was a deliberate tendency on the part of the reporters to mislead their audiences about the prevalence of AIDS in Africa. Rather, I am positing that profound cultural elements, such as socialization and institutional or organizational structures that have influenced the perception of the reporters over many years, are reflected in their news reporting about AIDS in Africa.

Thus, the elements or characteristics of institutional reporting bias from the foregoing analysis, was a rhetorical style that tended to blame, marginalize, and ostracize victims AIDS in Africa, and by extension, the continent itself. This institutional bias in reporting by some Western journalists is evident by their use of language that for the most part disregards the social and economic implications of their news slant for the countries under investigation. Furthermore, this approach served to maintain and reinforce already held conventional beliefs that the audience has about Africa in general – a backward disease ridden area where sexual promiscuity is the norm – in short, the idea of Conrad's dark continent.

To this end, news reports about the AIDS pandemic in Africa in The New York Times were clouded with exaggerations, speculations, and sometimes unverifiable claims that reinforced negativity as a primary news value in Western media. Additionally, by setting the AIDS pandemic in Africa as an agenda for public discourse, the news organizations involved also intended to profit from the stories that followed. This is why many of the stories may have been slanted to suggest an impending doom of a continent. This approach is of course intended to sell the newspapers especially when the headlines resembles those found on tabloid publications. And even more significantly, this approach affect public policy which translates into negative ramifications for the "guilty" countries and citizens of those countries and this is why for example, the Red Cross refuses to accept blood from me.

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CvCS

Writing in the Wind: Recreating Oral Culture in an Online Community

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Abstract:

"Writing in the Wind: Recreating Oral Culture in an Online Community"

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This study examines storytelling within a Usenet newsgroup for Harley-Davidson enthusiasts, arguing that the functions served by the posting of extensively detailed stories about members' travels in this text-based group replicate the functions of storytelling within an oral culture: the inculcation and regulation of proper behavior in group members.

Introduction

Glasses clink, smoke rises, and the Allman Brothers Band roars from the jukebox. Out in the parking lot, a long line of Harley-Davidson motorcycles stand waiting for their owners. Several bystanders gather around one bike, watching two people sort out a balky shift linkage. A stranger parks his new motorcycle carefully at the end of the line, attracting some notice from the bystanders. They watch in silence as he hangs his helmet from the handlebars and walks toward the door. Before he reaches it, the door flies open violently and a body hurtles out – a patron being forcibly ejected, followed by a large woman who jumps up and down on the man several times before kicking him in the ribs and turning to the newcomer. "I hate it when they don't listen," she says. "Come on inside and I'll explain the rules of this place. Welcome to the Virtual Bar and Grill."

Usenet newsgroups, a long-standing feature of computer-mediated communication technology, are a popular text-based coalescing point for various online communities of interest. In this study, the newsgroup rec.motorcycles.harley serves as the meeting point for those interested in discussing topics relating to Harley-Davidson motorcycles. Like a physical space, the virtual space has social structure, history, and rules of behavior. Since users are constrained to text-based technologies for passing along and reinforcing those rules to newcomers (and reiterating them to regular users), storytelling and the allegorical modeling of appropriate behavior become important techniques for passing the culture along.

In the physical world, people must use their skills of observation, knowledge of social cues, and ability to read body language and intonation to figure out social rules. Online, what would be subliminal must be explicit. Behaviors that would serve as models in the real world must be narrated to be observable. Because the participant population of rec.motorcycles.harley continually changes and the culture is a collaborative creation of all the participants, longtime members continually perform, narrate, and discuss acceptable behaviors. By doing so, they recreate the ancient oral cultural tradition of passing along by word-of-mouth the rules and roles of a society. It is my argument that rather than representing a wholly new form of community or communication, online groups such as rec.motorcycles.harley, even though text-based, incorporate many elements of an oral culture.

This paper evaluates the newsgroup rec.motorcycles.harley as a form of oral culture. The method for doing so combines ethnography with critical textual analysis while attempting to grapple with some of the complex ethical issues inherent in research on the Internet. In order to understand how the Internet (and in particular, Usenet) may be seen as an oral culture, it is necessary to be grounded in the theoretical perspectives that inform the questions that will be asked.

Theoretical Framework

To investigate how an online community functions as an oral culture, it is important to understand why an apparently writing-oriented medium operates as if the words were spoken instead.

Online communities on the Internet exist in a postmodern, "postnational" space where identities may be reformulated in new and innovative ways (Appadurai, 1996). Appadurai sees the development of what he calls sodalities, which he defines as communities formed around common interests, which begin to work together toward common goals. However, instead of creating a sodality out of a group of physically present people, the group can disconnect from a geographic location and create unity inside a virtual space.

Identity becomes fragmented and positional (Hall, 1994), worked out in the shadowy spaces between and beyond known identities – in liminal spaces where identity can be shaped to meet the demands of the moment (Babha, 1994). Identity on the Internet is also political and performative, as ways of being and expressing are selected to create desired impressions, which in themselves imply political stances occupied by the performer which may be resistive stances to the dominant political order (Butler, 1997).

A useful means of theorizing the way online communities develop is Anderson's (1991) concept of the "imagined community." Although Anderson (1991) was writing about the development of the nation-state, online communities seem to develop in parallel ways. Imagining a community, whether physical or virtual, is more involved than merely declaring existence. Communities online use many of the same strategies physical nations and cultural groups have traditionally employed to valorize their existence and supposed primacy.

Hall (1995) also speaks of the "narrative of the nation" and the ways in which it is told in the formation of a cultural identity. Hall's (1995) ideas also apply to the ways in which the narrative of the online group is formulated. Online communities have their own distinctive cultures and traditions, foundational myths, and often an original group of participants who may have moved on but whose memories are used to support traditional ways in the face of innovation by newcomers.

Online communities rely on the exchange of written material, as emails or chat-room texts or posts to a discussion group or newsgroup. Because written text is the only means of communicating, and because the interchange of communication is often spontaneous and synchronous (participants are online at the same time), written communication takes on the flavor of oral communication, and the culture of the group becomes much more like that of a pre-literate oral culture (Jones, 1998).

The Internet becomes much more like an oral culture as it becomes more interactive. One-way or non-interactive text, according to Carey (1992), cuts members of a society off from the potentials for active discussion and resistance. Carey was speaking of the chilling effect on public debate of the mass dissemination of written text. Public debate in this sense is oral storytelling and discussion, carried on interactively in the public sphere (Carey, 1992). Debate, storytelling and interactivity are not chilled by the Internet as they are by the one-way transmission of text and images, so the public sphere can move online, serving not only people who can meet physically in one location, but those in widely separated physical locations as well.

Despite their potential to enhance unity among dispersed groups, online communities increasingly contribute to the fragmentation of the media audience, and ultimately to the fragmentation of public debate (Jones, 1998). Although the Internet enables more people to connect with each other for discussions, the breakup of the public opinion into narrowly focused interest communities connects people deeply, but not widely (Carey, 1992). In order for an oral culture to function on the Internet, participants must be connected both deeply *and* widely, which implies not only discussions generated within the online environment, but continued and fostered in a face-to-face or IRL ("In Real Life") setting (Jones, 1998).

In a very down-to-earth way, the members of the newsgroup echo Baym (1998): "People who form online relationships usually move them to at least one additional channel" (p. 58). Baym's additional "channels" were telephones, mail, and face-to-face contacts; approximately a third of online participants in her study also sought out face-to-face meetings to supplement relationships formed online (Baym, 1998).

The idea that the public sphere can expand to envelop geographically separated groups and enable debate as if all were in the same place is not new. Sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies was one who foresaw such a development in 1922, in an idealized "New Community" incorporating groups distant in space but connected for debate by some (possibly technological) means. Such communities would contain people working together inside the community to meet their own needs, and collaborating with other communities at a distance to effect changes in society (Hardt and Splichal, 2000).

By implying not only the *connection* of groups at a distance, but by also envisioning their connection as an *enabler* of social change, Tönnies foreshadowed the recognition that both the Internet and what passes over it have profound political implications (Jones, 1998, Butler, 1997, Appadurai, 1996, Hall, 1995 and 1994, Babha, 1994, Carey, 1992).

The online community rec.motorcycles.harley can be understood as having characteristics of an oral culture. Deepening that understanding depends upon four questions:

- How does this online community function as an oral culture through storytelling?
- What role does gender play in determining who can tell which stories?

- If the telling of illustrative tales is intended to reinforce group norms and educate new members, which norms are being reinforced?
- Conversely, which viewpoints are being suppressed?

Methodology

Rec.motorcycles.harley represents a response to the fragmentation and segmentation of identity discussed by Kolko and Reid (1998), who cite the "cultural schizophrenia" of many Usenet groups as a result of posters' ability to perform multiple identities. Although the authors encourage the flexibility to negotiate identity in new ways on the Internet, they say virtual communities cannot survive unless they "allow and encourage a holistic projection of the self into the virtual landscape" (p. 227). The culture of rec.motorcycles.harley, by encouraging multiple-channel interactions and stressing the verifiability of identity allowed by such interactions (and by ostracizing community members discovered performing multiple identities) tends to solidify participant identities by a process Butler (1997) calls sedimentation – the accumulated expectations of how an identity should be performed.

The Internet must be studied both as culture *and* cultural artifact; a process Hine (2000) calls "virtual ethnography." Much like the practice of ethnography in a physical community, virtual ethnography requires the researcher to get into the field and make contact with community members. And much like the process of becoming familiar with the physical field setting, virtual ethnographers must begin as beginners, participating in exchanges as the newcomers they in fact are to the virtual community. Hine (2000) does not believe Internet researchers need identify themselves or the object of their research, if they are observing in a publicly accessible forum.

Protection of privacy is a serious concern in Internet research. Current Human Subjects Review committee policies state that what is publicly posted may be used for research without asking permission, and what is carried in any forum requiring a password or sign-up procedure (or on private email) cannot be used for research without permission. Since rec.motorcycles.harley is a public discussion forum, any posting to the newsgroup is open to observation.

The Association of Internet Researchers is attempting to construct global guidelines for ethical Internet research. The group has formulated four preliminary obligations, which it proposes Internet researchers should follow to "respect and protect human beings as autonomous agents – and thereby to protect human dignity" (p. 6):

- To do no harm;
- To protect subject anonymity;
- To protect confidentiality of data identifying subjects; and
- To obtain informed consent (AOIR, 2001).

This study uses the following techniques of analysis: virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000), microethnography (Berg, 1998), and ideological criticism (Foss, 1996). Microethnography, as Berg (1998) conceives it, "focuses more upon the face-to-face interactions of members of the group or institution under investigation" (p. 122). Although Berg (1998) and Geertz (1973) discuss ethnography in the more traditional sense of research performed in a physical field setting, the microethnographic technique and analysis of symbolism in text are applicable to the virtual field setting of the Internet

(Hine, 2000). The principal difference between the Internet and other field settings is that the researcher can enter the field yet remain invisible to the subjects (Hine, 2000), though the AOIR preliminary guidelines strongly discourage such behavior as an unethical invasion of privacy.

Ideological criticism can be viewed as a type of textual analysis. Beyond identifying underlying or latent themes in the text, ideological criticism considers texts of various sorts as artifacts that provide clues to the cultures that produce them. Foss (1996) writes that ideological criticism is used to "discover and make visible the dominant ideology or ideologies embedded in an artifact and the ideologies that are being muted in it" (pp. 295-296).

This methodological framework allows analysis of examples of oral storytelling on the newsgroup, from the context of how those stories are intended to socialize participants to the rules and behaviors of the group, with a view toward determining which ideological positions are supported and suppressed in the stories.

Selection of Participants

Participants were identified by an archival review of Usenet postings to rec.motorcycles.harley covering the previous six months, the period accessible on the researcher's server. Participants who had posted narrative accounts of events to the newsgroup ("storytellers") were identified, contacted by email, and each was then asked to participate in the project after it was explained to them. Private emails to a blind list were used to maintain anonymity of prospective participants from one another. The sample for this analysis is composed of all participants who responded with their permission by a date indicated in the original email message.

Rec.motorcycles.harley participants focus on how people use their motorcycles in their daily lives – live the Harley-Davidson "lifestyle." The stereotypical image of "bikers" as illiterate criminals is vilified and valorized by turns as a resistive act and as a behavior mode that attracts unwanted attention from the authorities.

While some participants attempt to style themselves as modern outlaws, several long-standing members of the group work to support a friendlier image through the modeling of "desirable" behaviors in their public storytelling. The stories of rides and meets point toward a dominant ideology painting members of the culture as inclusive, literate, diverse, ready to help other motorcyclists having trouble on the road, not affiliated with motorcycle gangs, self-reflective about their riding skills, eager to explore new places, willing to flout minor traffic laws, and fiercely supportive of their individual "right" to choose not to wear a helmet.

The stories illustrate how the storytellers observe the world around themselves and focus on the observer's reaction to that world. The fact that the observations were made from atop a motorcycle or in the course of a motorcycle ride is secondary. The stories are intended to "take along" riders from widely separated geographic locations, and by their wide distribution tend to reinforce the idea that good stories incorporate certain elements regardless of the locale in which the events take place. In addition to telling the relatively simple physical conditions and sensations of a motorcycle ride, what participants call "good" reports frequently contain a moral lesson, as a guide to behavior should the readers find themselves in similar situations.

Because of the dispersed nature of the group's membership (primarily U.S.-based, but participants also live in Canada, the United Kingdom and Europe), any rider who meets up with other members of the group for an "eyeball" is expected to post a report.

Texts

In the community of rec.motorcycles.harley, the premium is placed on stories that present allegorical lessons within their structure. Such lessons embedded within stories include managing in adverse or unexpected conditions, how to approach strangers, how to handle confrontational situations, and how to deeply observe and appreciate the natural forces that shape the countryside. Stories incorporate some common themes: teaching or modeling good riding skills, teaching the reader how to see and appreciate changes in scenery, and imparting a moral of sorts at the close of the story. The moral of the story reinforces the dominant ideology of the community.

The gender of the storyteller is less important, although in stories told by women there is often an explicit reference to the stereotype that women are not as skilled as men in handling heavy motorcycles, or that women riding motorcycles are somehow morally suspect. Each woman in this study faced those stereotypes in some fashion. Their stories also model proper and cautious learning behavior for the benefit of other women riders. One rider who often travels alone posted two experiences from the same day:

> "I stopped for gas in Hinkley, where the store proprietor commented that she'd never seen a lone woman biker heading out across the desert (...)
>
> I stopped for gas somewhere, a little sweaty and thirsty, I went into the store and grabbed a Gatorade, drinking it as I walked back to the bike to fuel it. A middle-aged-lady (putting gas into her "comfortable" car) actually *smiled*, no, *grinned*, at me as I walked toward her and the bike, and made some conversational comment about me being too small for that big bike" (T., a rider from Texas).

At the same time, a relatively new rider told of her experience on her first long ride, with two male friends who were more experienced riders than she:

> "On the way from the Denver area down to the Durango/Ignacio area, I was riding with two other guys, both experienced riders. I know they were bored out of their gourds riding as slow as I wanted to go around the curves in the road (…)" (H., a rider from Colorado).

A third woman rider with a penchant for following her impulses took off with three strangers, simply to see some new territory.

> "Frem phone click to departure in less than 45 minutes! Hey, when adventure comes knocking, you gotta be quick! (Besides, I'd been wanting to do the Sun Road since last summer, but kept putting it off because I didn't think it would be wise to make the trip alone and without weapons. There are wild animals up there! Lions, tigers and bears! Well, lions and bears, at least" (M., a rider from Montana).

Although the three women had divergent approaches to their lives, they exemplified a common thread: getting out and experiencing, after varying degrees of consideration for the hazards they could face. By contrast, male storytellers tend to treat the hazards of being on two wheels rather more cavalierly, if not humorously.

> "Most (of the deer) were content to sit alongside the road and watch traffic pass, but a couple of them were, apparently, collecting tolls. I blew past both of them, though not without having achieved a considerable Pucker Factor. One was rather obstinate, actually, reversing direction just when I thought I had him faked out. A quick flick of the hip, a bit of throttle, and a scrape of the side stand (the old Statue of Liberty play sans teammates) had him trotting off across the prairie in disgust. Next time I'm shooting him and mounting his rack on my headlight bezel. "Honest, officer! It was self-defense! He tried to kill me!" (S., a rider from Iowa).
>
> "What's this? Road construction? Wayouthere? Oh, yeah... Forest Road 11, the highway to nowhere. When completed, it will be essentially a direct route from Silver Bay on the north shore, to Hoyt Lakes on the Iron Range. This will be a first-class heavy haul roadway, for which there has been conspicuously little demand or need. When finished it will be a great place to open up a motorcycle, to see what it will do, though. Right now, it is a patch of loose muddy gravel crossing hwy 2, and my bike has a narrow front tire…" (K., a rider from Minnesota).
>
> "I was blazing along I-35 north of Des Moines on my way back home to Missouri, when I saw this couple off on the shoulder frettin' over their bike. I debated clamping the binders on but deferred to this 18-wheeler that was between me and the shoulder" (G., a rider from Missouri).

Because rec.motorcycles.harley is a text-oriented newsgroup, stories must rely on the pictures in people's heads for illustration. "Good" stories go beyond pointing at rocks, to pointing out specific geologic features that may be completely unfamiliar to the reader. Doing so in a way that refines the picture the reader carries in their imagination teaches the skills of being deeply observant and of being able to write about their observations. In this respect a female rider from Texas exhibits the same awareness and appreciation as a male rider from Minnesota.

> "I followed the Fremont River, and found myself at Capitol Reef National Park, a place I'd never even *heard* of. But even if I had, it couldn't have been more beautiful. The different rock formations were incredible!" (T., a rider from Texas).

> "This is a northern, or boreal, forest, and according to the terrain may consist of tamarack, black spruce, black ash, and white cedar around the swamps and bogs, or a mix of birch, aspen, and maple in the upland areas. Some areas will be densely wooded in red pine, spruce and balsam, as well. The forest is right up to the road's edge and now that I am 20 or 30 miles from the Big Lake there is snow on the ground" (K., a rider from Minnesota).

Beyond the physical observation of the scenery, the real focus of the story is often on the internal, almost spiritual changes that come from getting close to nature.

> "I now know the true meaning behind the Montana nickname--Big Sky Country. When you're standing on top of the world, you are standing alone in the sky. It isn't just above you--it is beside you, it is below you, it envelops you. And you become part of it" (M., a rider from Montana).

The combination of motorcycles and the Internet takes on a strange synergy. Most of the stories take place in the physical world, during travel across physical geography and in face-to-face contact with real people. The stories themselves, told in a virtual forum, often emphasize the desirability of getting away from the virtual and into the physical – as Baym (1998) suggests, taking the virtual relationship into another "channel," often a physical meeting. The culture of the newsgroup celebrates enthusiasts who venture out into the world; there is a corresponding view that anyone who is unwilling to do so is a second-class citizen. What takes place "offline" or "IRL" verifies what happens inside the newsgroup, and members often use their communications in the newsgroup to set up meetings – for a group ride, a lunch meeting, to welcome a new participant and "put a face to the name," or to plan a gathering that may pull in 200 riders from all over the U.S. and Canada. Because participants are expected to get out and meet with others, sometimes stories don't mention names and sometimes gloss over specific occurrences. If the reader was not in attendance, they know they missed something. The remedy is clear: show up next time and see what happens.

> "Having seen the sights, I returned to camp and discovered...friends. Friends, friends everywhere, and not a one of them had a beer. A pleasant evening of conversation ensued, and eventually we retired to our respective lairs. Monday dawned bright and early, with new riders showing up on an hourly basis. They all know who they are, and a great time was had meeting new friends, catching up on old stories..." (S., a rider from Iowa).

Although the stereotype of the Harley-Davidson rider as an outlaw gang member is widely acknowledged, actual membership in an outlaw gang is strongly censured within the rec.motorcycles.harley community. One of the unspoken rules of the newsgroup is that anyone who sees another rider broken down by the side of the road should stop to assist. Members of the group hold the notion that such supportive behavior is uncommon in outlaw biker clubs. Some of the stories told on the newsgroup incorporate the experience of stopping to give aid, and again the message is clear: it's what real riders do – even when the rider having trouble turns out to be an outlaw biker, or is dragged home by a child from the store.

> "I pulled to a stop behind the guy and as I stepped off the bike, he slowly turned his head and appraised me out of a pair of steely eyes, half hidden by the smoke from a cigarette stub hanging out of his mouth. As I pulled off the helmet and gloves I caught a glimpse of his "colors." Sons of Silence. Wishing I knew some secret handshake or sign or something, I put on my best haggard biker look, swaggered up (just outside his reach) and whined, 'Having trouble?'" (G., a rider from Missouri).

> "...decided she needed to go to the store one last time. And, a half-hour later, at 7 a.m., she arrived back home on the back of a Gold Wing being trailed by two Harleys. "They need oil, Mom, and I told them you wouldn't mind being awoken this early and that you'd have the oil or that you'd know where they could get some cause you're a biker too. They're nice guys, Mom. And they have nice bikes – well, two of them, anyway. Come on, Mom, you know you don't mind. Get up. You have oil, don'tcha Mom? 60 weight?" (M., a rider from Montana).

A final element of these stories is often a moral lesson, which serves to underscore the dominant ideology: that riding carefully, paying attention, taking the virtual relationship into another channel, being open to rethinking personal stereotypes, and still fulfilling real world commitments and responsibilities are behaviors valued by the community.

> "Yeah, you experienced guys are giggling at me, but you fellow novices are nodding "Yeah!" right? … all of a sudden I was taking the curves a lot more confidently. I'm sure it was still too slow for my riding companions, but they're both great guys, and were nice about just smiling at me the whole time" (H., a rider from Colorado).

Adversity and physical discomfort are more frequent attendants of a motorcycle ride than a ride in an automobile, but at the same time the discomfort is part of the experience.

> "It's now Thursday evening, as I finish typing this. My jacket is hanging on the doorknob, a damp towel under it. It's still not only damp, but about ten pounds heavier than normal. My saddlebags have mostly dried out, and as of this evening most of the condensation in the speedometer and lights on the Harley has gone. My boots are still wet, and probably will be for the next several days… And you know what? I'd go through it all again tomorrow for another weekend in Rapid City during Sturgis" (S., a rider from Iowa).

Particularly in the case of a solo ride across a forbidding landscape, one of the female riders felt afterward that she had unlocked the answers to some larger questions.

> "I was urgently trying to get my rain suit on, I wanted to get through the rain before the lightning part moved south over the roadway. I was too busy praying hard, to listen for an answer, but a voice finally cut through the panic in my head and said, "Just wait". And so I did. I sat on the bike in my rain suit, relaxing against my tour pack, for 20 minutes, watching that big storm roll across the desert. It is difficult to describe the silence and the solitude of where I was, alone on the line between mountains and desert. It is even more difficult to describe the power and grandeur of the distant storm as it rolled across the desert, in what to me was utter silence. Together, they gave me a small perspective of my relative stature in the Universe, and a calm understanding of awe (…)" (T., a rider from Texas).

Discussion and Conclusion

The laws and rules of conduct in rec.motorcycles.harley are passed down by group members of long standing to newcomers in stories such as those examined in this study. By implication in these stories, anyone who is not living up to the expectations of the group – by seeking membership in an outlaw club, by being disrespectful of women riders, not helpful to fellow riders, by not meeting with other people from the newsgroup, or who is lacking an expected degree of humility as a new rider – is consigned to a marginalized position. The marginalizing process is often conducted and reinforced by a public ostracism of the offender, a withdrawal from interaction with them.

Long-standing participants feel a deep sense of ownership toward the newsgroup, which was officially incorporated in 1990. The stories of these same participants (some of them having achieved nearly mythic status) are widely read, widely discussed (even in IRL settings), widely imitated, and widely used as examples of both how to experience and how to write about the experience afterward.

Although examples were not used in this study, stories originally written by participants who have since died are occasionally circulated, revered as kind of metaphysical connection to the origins of the newsgroup. Such circulation places, as Hall (1995) said, an "emphasis on origins, continuity, tradition and timelessness" (p. 613). These stories constitute a "virtual hagiography," and at least so far do not appear to have diverged from their original forms; due in part to the archival nature of the Usenet database Dejanews, which can supply exact copies of the originals in some cases.

Current members of the group modeled their behavior after the founders when they first entered the community; new members are expected to model their behavior in the same fashion. The sedimentation of role and tradition passed along in the storytelling has become nearly unbreakable. In the face of that sedimentation, community members have two choices: adapt and cooperate, or leave in search of a more palatable community.

Leaving as a resistance act does not carry the same stigma often attached to leavings in the physical world. Dissenters are always free to start their own Usenet group, link a discussion board to their own website, start their own email list, or use any of several authoring tools to create a virtual space within which they may mold the discussion to fit their preferences. As these groups work within their own virtual boundaries toward their own ends, they incorporate members who belong to several groups. Such members, through the connections between and among the groups to which they belong, help to move the greater project of social change ahead by expanding the ways in which identity is conceived, negotiated and performed.

The depth and richness of the performance of the facets of identity allowed by the Internet is a fertile ground for further research. Possibilities for further investigation lie in the interactions between virtual and physical nations, and in the effects on the physical nation when a virtually-constructed community or national identity jumps from the electronic world and imposes itself on the physical political framework.

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C4CS

Hands-on Communication

The rituals limitations of Web publishing in the alternative zine community

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The Internet seems to promise the producers of "zines"—independent publications characterized by idiosyncratic themes, low circulation, irregular frequency, ephemeral duration, and noncommercial orientation—an irresistible alternative to the medium of print. However, this study finds that many zine editors have resisted migrating to the Web and that those who have published online remain ambivalent toward the prospects for and realities of this new communication technology. I argue, based on in-depth interviews, that interactivity is a mental and social characteristic of these self-publishers, who believe that paper and xerography may work better to achieve their goals of hands-on participation in an alternative cultural community.

Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication conference in Miami, August 2002

"Net culture, as it happens, is an even greater medium for individual expression than the pamphlets cranked by hand presses in colonial America."
– Jon Katz, in WIRED Magazine (May 1995)

"Anyone with a modem is potentially a global pamphleteer."
–in the New York Times (November 1995)

In the Internet boom years of the mid 1990s, an array of media critics, professionals and scholars envisaged new Web publishing technologies as having revolutionary potential, the power to strengthen or weaken democracy itself. Drawing on a centuries-old philosophy that media capabilities themselves can foster a more democratic communication system and a "diversity of voices far beyond anything known today,"[1] writers at commercial publications including *The New York Times* and *WIRED* explicitly equated Web publishers with revolutionary pamphleteers such as Tom Paine. They began forecasting that new Internet-based tools—e-mail, mailing lists, newsgroups and Web sites—would aid them to readily rival paper ones like *Common Sense* in their social and cultural impact.

These predictions have rung true to some extent, as the Internet has transformed many publishing practices in the mainstream, alternative, and independent press alike by offering more information and organization to more people, at lower costs, with improved quality.[2] But analogies between paper-based printing and Web publishing are problematic in at least two important ways. First, they overlook how the cultural, social, political and economic contexts of non-profit publishers—and Paine, who died a pauper, certainly was one—differ from the commercial milieu. Second, they slight the robust lineage of active pamphleteers who have been continuously cranking out printed matter since 1776 for the sheer passion of communicating.

Technological determinism suggests that the independent producers of small-scale "zines"—publications that are usually characterized by their idiosyncratic themes, low circulations, irregular frequencies, ephemeral durations, personal tones and noncommercial orientations—would consider the Internet an irresistible alternative to the medium of print. Based on in-depth interviews, however, this study concludes that many zine editors have resisted the Web and that even those who have published or are publishing online remain ambivalent about both the realities of and the prospects for this new technology. This study, which suggests that the Internet may not be living up to its potential for fostering diverse and democratic expression in the media, also confirms Matthew Smith's observation that while print zines serve as a precedent for e-zines, most e-zines are not transplanted print zines (1999).

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[1] Ithiel de Sola Pool, Technologies of Freedom: On Free Speech in an Electronic Age. (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap/Harvard Press, 1983).

[2] Michael X. Delli Carpini, "Gen.com: Youth, civic engagement, and the new information environment," and Margaret Scammell, "The Internet and civic engagement," in *Political Communication* 17 (2000), pp. 341-355.

To this end, I argue that interactivity is not a technological feature but a mental and social characteristic of self-publishers, who believe that paper and xerography work better to achieve their goals of hands-on participation in an alternative cultural community. Furthermore, I speculate that what James Carey calles the "ritual" metaphor of communication seems to align much more closely with these zine producers' views than transmission. They described their mediated communication as ideally hands-on, participatory and two-way... as creating and affirming communal bonds between themselves, their readers and other self-publishers.[3] And they thought that print was better for this.

By talking to self-publishers, I hoped to supplement the dominant dot-com discourse that focuses on commerce, competition and profit as motives for and decisive factors in adopting or rejecting Web publishing technologies. And by considering zine communication as ritual, I aim to identify underanalyzed aspects of communication and expand the boundaries of the field.

From print zine to e-zine

As leading press outlets touted the coming age of Internet democracy, those same periodicals also discovered the self-publishing community of zines.[4] Since the early 20th century, this loose and ever-shifting agglomeration of individuals and collaborators—some of whom eschew the term 'zine' for its amateur connotations—has created labors of love ranging from poorly photocopied, handwritten booklets to polished, full-color magazines. Zine editors central to this community have consciously located themselves in the radical print tradition of Paine and Franklin, ranters and anarchists, Dada artists and science-fiction fans, flower children and punk do-it-yourselfers.[5] They also describe their publishing endeavors in progressive and deterministic terms not unlike de Sola Pool's:

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[3] James W. Carey, "A Cultural Approach to Communication," in Communication as Culture: Essays on Media and Society (Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1989).

[4] The term "zine," derived from either magazines or fanzines (a contraction of "fan magazines"), remains somewhat nebulous and hard to distinguish from the underground press, alternative press, small press, fanzines, or even just

> "A revolution in technology has inspired an amazing surge of free expression and cultural ferment (…) Over the centuries, as we've gone from the hired scribe to the first printing press to the photocopy machine (and now on to the computer networks), the print media have become more democratized."
> – Mike Gunderloy and Cari Goldberg Janice, in The World of Zines (1992)

This unusual convergence in the mid-1990s of mass popularization of the high-tech Internet boom and what some have called the low-tech "Great Zine Explosion,"[6] fueled by publicity,[7] could be considered a type of temporal crossroads for two paths of democratic expression. At that time, estimates placed the number of zines being published in the United States at 10,000, with a total audience in the millions.[8] Yet despite this new technology's growing availability, the zine scene seemed to flounder after 1995 as the media attention, book deals, and major anthologies waned.

The rise of the "e-zine" as a medium uniting zine content and electronic publication, which some conceived as the best of both worlds, promised an irresistible migratory route. Choosing to

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newsletters—an inclusive orientation that many self-publishers value. Although some defy classification, zines' identities are usually grounded in the personalities and passions of their publishers.

[5] See R. Seth Friedman, The Factsheet Five Zine Reader: The Best Writing from the Underground World of Zines, (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1997); John Labovitz, "Five years and counting: E-zine list-maker sums it up," in *The Art Bin: Articles and Essays* (March 2001), available at www.art-bin.com/art/alabovitz.html; Nico Ordway, "History of zines," in V. Vale, Zines! Vol. I: Incendiary Interviews with Independent Publishers. (San Francisco: RE/Search, 1996).

[6] See John Marr, "Zines are dead," in *Bad Subjects: Political Education for Everyday Life*, 46, (December 1999).

[7] Zines enjoyed widespread mainstream attention at that time, as their editors made national television appearances and were featured prominently in national newspapers, including the front page of the *Wall Street Journal* (Sept. 1, 1995: "Zines of the Times: Have an Obsession? Then, Why Not Publish Your Own Magazine?").

[8] See Mike Gunderloy and Cari Goldberg Janice, The World of Zines: A Guide to the Independent Magazine Revolution, (New York: Penguin, 1992).

publish a zine on the Web instead of on paper offers, according to techno-optimists, a potential audience in the millions—readers they could never reach given the limitations of cost on self-publishers and of traditional distribution via personal or postal delivery. But despite the fact that Web communication technologies have been theorized as easier, faster, cheaper and cleaner than print ones, zine producers have nonetheless tended either not to migrate to the Web or, if they do, to find fewer rewards online than on paper.

Methodology

In this study, I asked some zine editors how they both use *and* think about Web publishing, in order to investigate the meanings that they give to their communicative actions. For example, how does this community of alternative-culture producers interpret the Web's potential for individual expression? Do they think it offers any better tools than the xerography and desktop publishing they have been using? And, do they even talk about this new technology in the same terms that they do print, as the mainstream publishers are wont to do?

The self-publishers' attitudes and activities were explored through qualitative interviews, which are especially well suited to understanding the producers' own perspectives, to drawing out their "cultural logic" and producing explanations of their behaviors.[9] I conducted one-to-one telephone interviews of about one to two hours each with these volunteers over three months, in most cases followed up by e-mail exchanges elaborating on points that arose during the phone calls.[10] These were not structured "Q&A"-format interviews but rather informal, free-ranging conversations propelled by some directive questions from me. This open-ended approach helped steer the interviews toward their meanings and categories rather than confining the discussion to my own preconceptions.

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[9] In Thomas R. Lindlof, Qualitative Communication Research Methods. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 1995).

[10] Because the editors of such obscure, ephemeral publications are widely dispersed throughout the United States, it was somewhat difficult to obtain their personal information. Thus, I contacted those whose e-mail addresses are provided at a comprehensive, well-known Web site devoted to the zine community. I invited 27 self-publishers to participate in this study via e-mail messages; seven of these both replied and were subsequently available for interviews during the time period of the study.

These current and former zine producers belong to an interpretive community in which fellow communicators tend to be familiar with—if not, indeed, friends with—each other. This community frame suggests that their practices must be considered in the context of informal contacts, shared discourse and collective interpretations.[11] (In order to foster freer discussions, interviewees were assured anonymity.) Most said they have already thought and talked with friends and/or associates about print and Web publishing technologies; thus, few of the ideas expressed in this study were generated by the experience of conversing with me.

This study can only represent—and, to some extent, construct—the viewpoints of this small group and not those of the diverse population of zine producers, about whom it would be difficult or impossible to generalize. By focusing on editors already publishing zines in the mid-1990s, I aimed to explore some perspectives of people involved in the print-zine "boom" who have an experiential, subjective basis for comparison to the subsequent diffusion and development of Web publishing.

I also considered these confidential interviews in relation to the discourse on zines provided in books and articles published by several "leaders" of the zine "movement."[12] These texts, in which producers often reflect extensively upon their publishing activities and their interactions within a community of alternative publishers and readers, offer important context regarding self-publishers' attitudes toward and uses of technology. Immersion in these materials helped me tune into some of the "shared assumptions, contextual understandings, common knowledge, and reciprocal aims of speakers in everyday life" that are absent in the interview situation.[13]

Before setting down my interpretations, I shared them with the producers whose meanings and practices they are meant to reflect and invited comments, clarifications and corrections. That feedback also guided the analysis and conclusions here, which I revised to align more closely with the subjects' own.

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[11] For more discussion of how producers, like readers, can form an interpretive community, see Barbie Zelizer, "Journalists as interpretive communities," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 10 (1993).

[12] See Jen Angel and Theo Witsell, "Thoughts on Technology: A collaborative effort examining the effects of technology (& its corporate control) on our lives and the world," Fucktooth #24/Spectacle #5, (May 1999); Stephen Duncombe, Notes from Underground: Zines and the Politics of Alternative Culture, (NY: Verso, 1997); Friedman, *op. cit.*; Gunderloy and Janice, *op. cit*; Marr, *op. cit*; Chip Rowe (ed.), The Book of Zines: Readings from the Fringe, (New York: Henry Holt & Co, 1997).

[13] In Elliot G. Mishler, Research Interviewing: Context and Narrative. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard, 1986).

Zine practices, zine meanings

All of these self-publishers see various utilitarian, economic and ecological advantages to the Internet—speed, ease, flexibility, affordability, saving trees, global reach...—and now use it for e-mail, networking, as a research tool, etc. (One zine editor, in fact, notes the irony that he recently used the Internet heavily—doing research online and interviews by e-mail—for an issue that appeared only in print form).

A remarkable thing among those self-publishers with Web sites is that none of them are publishing the content of their print zines on the Internet. Most of them use their sites not as communicative ends in themselves but as means of promotion or publicity. The Internet was talked about almost as a big reference book—a catalog, encyclopedia or yellow pages—that just facilitates their real objective of getting printed materials into the hands of their audience.[14] Their main motive to establishing a Web presence isn't profit, just as making money was peripheral to their printing activities.[15] But hey, they wouldn't mind recouping their costs and emptying out those closets or basements, in some cases.

Some of these independent publishers are using the Web for more elaborate purposes than just establishing a virtual contact point for print publications. They say they enjoy writing for or designing Web sites and put a good deal of energy to it, even while some fear "sounding pretentious" for being so familiar with Web technology and apologize for "having to know these things." Still, they assert that they don't get as much joy or gratification out of the Web as they do (or did) from printing zines, which are spoken about as personifications of their creators:

> "(...) at least e-zines are not killing trees, not stealing shelf space from worthier zines. A lot of *bad zines have pushed aside worthier people* who could have used the distribution (...) To this day I still prefer paper and magazines to the Web, because—

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[15] Many self-publishers charge a dollar or two for their zines, when they don't just give them away.

> not to sound like a whore—it's nice to get wider distribution. I'm ambitious, I suppose." [italics added]

One self-publisher distinguishes between the two technologies thus:

> "Distribution is an interesting difference between print and Internet. Everything is kind of backwards in a way. The Internet has the easiest distribution in the world; you don't even have to think about it. Trying to get noticed is a lot tougher. There's so much more information on the Internet, so much more gobbledygook. When you're in a magazine you've got their attention for as long as they hold the magazine."

Many zine editors find little incentive to put much time into Web publishing—unless they're doing it on someone else's clock, it seems. Financial rewards for this activity are usually limited to the possibility of selling a few additional copies of their publications. But the logic of the market does not quite apply here; psychological and social payoffs play more important roles. The production of zines involves identity, drama and performance to a greater extent than information, which plays out in the relative appeal of different technologies. Whereas several of these editors try to rationalize their use or non-use of the Web through economies and ecologies, they often describe printing and handing out zines in terms of friendship, self-aggrandizement, pleasures and passion—as "a labor of love" and not of reason. "It's hard to quantify what it is about print," one of these independent publishers says, signaling an affective orientation to the medium. Another puts it in terms of psychological and social gain:

> "The only reasons you do this are to be congratulated, to have people say 'Wow you're a really good writer, really talented,' and to make friends. Most people I know do it for that reason, because they like the attention."

On the other hand, the anonymity and virtuality of Web publishing often leaves a sense of sorrow. A former print zine editor who now contributes to someone else's Web site says, "It's something sad that I miss, having a print zine, as opposed to writing for the Internet." Another former zine editor, who now produces his own Web site, adds: "I feel sad about the technology of Web sites, because even if I printed out all the pages, they'd just be superfluous and airy."

Several of these editors also assert an artistic and aesthetic judgment when they value printing on paper over publishing on the Web. For example, one echoed the sentiments of others in saying that "a printed zine (or any other printed material) is so much more aesthetically appealing than a web page." Zines may be mechanically reproduced works of art, but perhaps by virtue of being *finitely* reproduceable they still have more "aura," as Walter Benjamin puts it,[16] and seem more permanent, more unique than the virtual alternative of e-zines.

Those independent publishers interviewed here who do not have Web sites for their zines aren't philosophically opposed to this new technology; one said he is "not a Luddite" and for another, "it's a matter of personal taste more than politics." A few consider themselves simply "indifferent" or "not gung-ho." Interestingly, some note a certain amount of social pressure to get on the Internet bandwagon. Some already have plans to create (or ideas about creating) a Web site or even have a domain name registered already, but say they just haven't bothered to do anything about it yet. This might be due to practical considerations – no time, no equipment, no skills – but they imply that they could likely overcome those obstacles if they wanted to.

Somehow, though, producing stuff for the Web just doesn't seem "fulfilling" enough compared to their print activities or seems like "more trouble than it's worth." One who has stopped printing a zine since the mid-1990s said he would "never be inclined to do a zine on the Internet, [he thinks he] would go back to print." Another who's considering a Web site said, "My site would never be a substitute; print comes first."

Some of these editors who are no longer active in self-publishing said their decisions to cease the activity had less to do with technology, access or cost than with changing interests and biographical availability (careers, families, homes, other commitments…). However, the pattern of adopting or rejecting the new medium according to their own mental characteristics rather than any particular features of the technology recurred in my interviews with this group of zine editors. In explaining how they justified their choices of "to Web or not to Web," they repeatedly touched upon the three themes, related to justifying these choices of social interaction, permanence, and physicality.

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[16] In Walter Benjamin, Illuminations: Essays and Reflections, (NY: Schocken, 1968), p. 222.

Technology and social interaction

Despite the apparent ease of online circulation, they bemoaned that it's still hard to get noticed on the Internet. In addition to "alienating," some described online publishing in terms such as "lonely," "overwhelming," that they felt like "a pebble in a pond" or "one among millions"—which clearly appears at odds with the desires for originality, attention and interaction that spur many zine editors to produce in the first place. Maybe speed isn't always such an advantage, they suggested, as it often makes communication hastier and less substantive; another called the decline of letter writing "a loss." They also noted as a big drawback the fact that some zine editors and readers/potential readers do not have access to computers.

Even if the postal service is sometimes "frustrating," they liked sending and receiving mail so weren't necessarily eager to cut out the mailman. One editor, who used to write two- or three-page letters in correspondence with his readers, said he's not as emotionally invested in his Web site as he was in zines because online communication is typically too anonymous for his liking:

> "If the counter from my dot-com shows that 1,400 people visited, I might only know who one or two of those people are. Who are the other 1,398? Who's looking at this? Some might write back and say "Your site is cool" but that's it. It's frustrating. It's slightly alienating."[17]

The Internet also helps them stay in contact with readers and to reach new ones who might not know where or how to find them otherwise. One editor said that, to his mind, the *only* real benefit of Web publishing is "you can reach a lot of people." In another's words, "We don't want to give everything away on the Web because we want people to write to us." A third, who thought the great thing about doing a zine was "meeting people in the flesh," said:

> "[When I was self-publishing], I would go to a rock show with hundreds of zines in my backpack, and see someone who seemed like a like mind, and thrust one into their hands. It'd probably end up in their bathroom… but you can't do that with a Web site."

Technology and permanence

The impermanence of the Internet may offer some practical benefits to self-publishers, as this passage from one interview highlights:

> "The Web is beautiful in that it don't cost to update. Print's great, I love it, but it has no flexibility. Printers are not your friends when you're running past deadline and need more time. With [Web-editing software] you can just make an adjustment; it's not a permanent medium."

But, according to these interviews, zine producers by and large preferred the sensory interactions of personally printing and circulating their publications. Indeed, some of them that launched Web sites in the 1990s have scaled them down to make them less labor-intensive or have stopped actively maintaining them because they don't want to devote much time to them any more.

In a way, "permanence" takes on contradictory meanings for them: these editors may like their final products—print zines—to endure, but they don't necessarily want their commitment to publishing activities to be long-lived, as e-zines tend to require. And, while some readers avidly collect and preserve these little Xeroxed publications, the cheapness of the print medium also encourages the contrary response of using them up, disposing them. One editor found virtual publishing even more disposable: "I always thought zines, photocopying, was the most throwaway medium ever until I knew about the Web."

Since publication implies the periodicity and variability of content, online publishers are expected to keep Web sites timely, or at least timeless. Some of these editors suggested their preference is shifting toward the latter. Said one editor who minimized his online publishing, with an air of contrition:

> "I'm still figuring out how to make it work for me. Most sites grow out of trying to promote yourself or trying to sell things. I didn't want to do that. Maybe it's my love-hate relationship with the Web. I'm not completely sold. Or guess I'm just lazy. But I still think in print terms, not in screen terms."

Or another, who was considered an alternative network pioneer for having assembled a meta-list of more than 4,000 online zines, said that the apparent ease and flexibility of virtual publishing proved deceptive. If a Web zine became successful, it became an even more permanent commitment than the original print publication had been. He explained:

> "That's why people still do paper zines: they don't have to worry about how to keep going in the future because it's possible with the technology and the limited outreach to maintain [the publication] with a small group of people, which is much rarer on the Web. So often the site turns into a huge thing, and the question becomes, 'Now how do we support it, maintain it, go further?"

Similarly, a third editor in this sample says she scaled down her Web site, which was generating a lot of hits, because her interests shifted and she was no longer inclined to update her pages.

So, while online publishing's impermanence may lend the medium flexibility, the Web also requires a lasting personal commitment to maintenance that many self-publishers would rather avoid. Just like their creations, many editors are idiosyncratic, ephemeral and irregular—and print suits the zine mentality better than the Internet. The permanence/impermanence of these two mediums is intricately linked to their physicality.

Technology and physicality

Zine editors recognized that Web publishing offers several practical publishing benefits, both real and potential. The Internet has fewer limitations, one said, because there are no physical objects that publishers have to get out at a certain time. Yet despite the adaption—or co-optation, as some consider it—of the label[18] to suit the Web environment, zines still *are* paper to many of these producers. Some people likened them to other printed matter such as business cards or resumes, or described them as diaries; one editor cherishes his printed zine as "a piece of me." For this reason, many put less emotion and effort into the high-tech mode than the low-tech one:

> "I don't really do any high-intensity research or writing any more, not for the Web. I view it more like a hole I'm throwing things into; maybe people see it when it comes out the bottom, but it's not doing any good for me. Zines were just this creative enterprise where I tried to make every word count; they were something I put out to represent me."

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[18] For example, some decry that terms such as "Web zines" or "e-zines" got picked up as "marketing buzzwords."

Another theme incompatible with virtual publishing that recurred in our talks was "hands" (putting them in people's hands, holding them in your hands, hands-on), which underscores the importance of both materiality and mailboxes, the visiting of which at least one editor describes as "a ritual." They "still need the feel of turning a page," according to one self-publisher, who takes pleasure in the fact that "every issue that goes out of here goes through our hands." Another, apologizes:

> "Maybe I'm just old school and set in my ways but I like to have something I can pick up and copy and dog-ear and have in my bed and in my hands, something tactile (...)"

They also said communication with friends or readers through e-mail, though more convenient, is less psychologically and aesthetically satisfying than getting real letters: handwritten, with drawings or "goofy things falling out of them." Another editor, of both print and online publications, elaborated:

> "The Internet is okay for networking, but for actually experiencing small publishing, I personally prefer to have a print zine in my hands than on the screen. I like that it's tactile, that I can sit in a chair, that I don't have to be connected to a computer or machine. It's simple and direct."

Simply put: Web presence signaled an absence to these editors, who said they like their zines to have a material existence in places where life happens daily: buses, bathrooms, book and coffee shops, music stores and clubs, etc. This preference seemed to rest on a combination of artistic, social, affective and even sensuous orientations, suggested the editor who "likes having a physical object that [he] can give to people and put on a bookshelf and read on the bus. On the computer screen, it doesn't have the same appeal." Or the one who said:

> "There's something gratifying about print. When the zines come back from the press you can hold them and touch them and mail them to people. You don't get the same sense from a Web page. Some people do both print and Web versions, but print means more to them."

Discussion

Alienation. Fulfillment. Joy. Frustration. Sadness. Laziness. Ambition. Pretension. Hate. Loneliness. Love. Gratification. These are the affective terms in which these zine editors talked about their attitudes toward Web communication—which supports my argument that interactivity is not a technological feature of the Internet but a mental one. To understand how groups of people like these self-publishers adopt or reject various mediums, we must understand not the technology but rather how users (and non-users) think about their communicative actions in their social contexts.

Most of these alternative culture producers seemed to prefer print because it functions better for them in what Carey characterizes as the "ritual" mode of communication, a term the aforementioned mailbox visitor used. To quote another observation that supports this distinction reminiscent of facts versus forum: "My Web site is information, but publishing is still done at the printer." Others said that print is "more personal and special," whereas they use the Internet for its transmission advantages, that it's "a good tool" or "more like doing business."

They seemed to be telling me that they publish less to send or receive information than to engage in a communicative situation in which "a particular view of the world is portrayed and confirmed"[19] and in which personal connections are made and maintained. (Exempting one case, no editors in this study used the terms "message" or "information" in describing their production activity.) And, their actions were thought about as grounded in the lived experience of their community—not just geographical, but of shared interests.

Such observations support Michael Schudson's explanation of "how ritual transmits culture: the viewer is also actor, the audience is participant, and the distinction between the producer and consumer of culture is blurred if it exists at all."[20] The ritual view evident here directs communication toward constructing, representing and maintaining an alternative, oppositional or subcultural society—goals that both print and Internet publishing media may enable in varying ways but cannot determine.

One of the self-publishers who contributed to this study, who said creating a community is important to him, agreed with my interpretation of zine production and circulation; he said ritual runs "almost to the point of fetish" in his communicative activities.[21] Another editor suggested that "ritual" might just be another word for "art," explaining his view that "The high-tech aspect of Web work often makes the art-making less easy—like a paintbrush that requires so much effort to use that you can't represent the flowers you see."

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[19] In Carey, *op.cit.*, p. 18.

[20] In "How culture works: Perspectives from media studies on the efficacy of symbols," *Theory and Society* 18 (1989), p. 173.

[21] He continued, "The zine phenomenon is not a publishing phenomenon, which explains why no publishers were able to exploit it to make some coin. It's a social phenomenon instead (…) It's the mouthpiece of subcultures, along with flyers,

Although these two categories aren't mutually exclusive or diametrically opposed, ritual represents a rather different way of looking at media production than transmission, which is more one-way, utilitarian, purposive, rationalized. The ritual perspective considers communication as symbolic or arational, rather than instrumental or rational, action.[22] Obviously, most of the participants in this study didn't think about self-publishing zines in a strictly cost-benefit analysis kind of way; otherwise they likely would not do it at all. As Eric Rothenbuhler has noted—following on a sociological strand that leads from Emile Durkheim through Paul Hebdige—humans do not live by calculation alone but by social relations, public visibility, active identity creation and rituals of style.[23]

In order to avoid correlating one of these communication technologies exclusively with one of these communicative modes, however, it must be noted that some zine editors suggest that the Internet has ritual potentials, ones perhaps less developed at this time. They say some people in the zine community are using the Web for somewhat ritualistic purposes (such as "blogging," live journals, newsgroups, chat rooms…), although none of those interviewed here are very involved in those practices. Many of these particular independent publishers wanted to convene in person with their geographic neighbors, contrary to the "utopian notion that the Internet will lift us above the confines of geography."[24] They believe, as David Paul Nord has written, that their publications get their meanings in large part from the contexts in which they are circulated and read.[25]

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graffiti punk bands, guerilla video, and many other forms of underground communication. And it's inherently non-hierarchical, because anybody with an opinion and access to a copy machine can do it."

[22] In Eric Rothenbuhler, Ritual Communication: From Everyday Conversation to Mediated Ceremony. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1998).

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] In Andrew Shapiro, "The Net that Binds: Using cyberspace to create real communities," *The Nation* (June 21, 1999), p. 14.

[25] In David Paul Nord, Communities of Journalism: A History of American Newspapers and Their Readers. (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2001), p. 2.

This study might need a few caveats at this point. First, that it doesn't have a representative sample of writers and editors. The ones to whom I talked generally distanced themselves from the ideas of zine production as a political act or movement, whereas sending political messages is an explicit role that a lot of independent publishers do embrace. Zine editors are not all activists; individuals might consider themselves either alternative or oppositional (or perhaps neither, or both).[26] And, at least one of these self-publishers is an exception to this tendency towards ritual: he talked about publishing as "getting a message out" and noted that he had stopped publishing after he thought he had adequately communicated that information. In fact, this person resisted even describing his publication as a 'zine' because he did not identify with what one might call the *Factsheet Five* community. The final obvious but necessary disclaimer: all of the attitudes and activities are subject to change as time passes, so that interviews conducted even a year hence might yield very different interpretations than those I'm presenting now.

In these interviews, the zine producers repeatedly explain that their particular uses of the Web are in direct response to the increasing real-world shortage of publicity and distribution outlets for self publishers in recent years: the decline of many independent book and music shops, a drop in support from national book retailers, the disappearance of uberzine *Factsheet Five*,[27] and unreliable attention from the fickle mainstream press.[28] Even the editor of *FactSheet Five*—which one self-publisher describes as "a central place that everyone could pay attention to, that would review anything and everything people sent them"— ceased updating that Web site and warned he might shut it down for good in January 2001, despite publicity from national media from *The Wall Street Journal* to *GQ*.

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[26] Furthermore, there are good arguments that even seemingly nonpolitical acts of zine publishing might be considered a form of micropolitics or prepolitics, as consumers become producers and participants; see Delli Carpini, Duncombe and Scammell, ops. cit.

[27] *FactSheet Five* has been defunct in print for several years. See *www.factsheet5.com* for more information.

[28] One editor explained: "Everybody thought the zine thing would be bigger than it was, but it got harder to get distribution in the 90s. Distributors just cut them out in '95-'96."

Of course, these situations could change at any time, which might make the Web more or less useful and appealing to zine editors. For example, a few editors noted that mega-bookstores have lately begun to show interest in getting more independently published materials onto their shelves.

Some self-publishers interviewed here were especially concerned about reflecting the contingency of their attitudes towards and uses of publishing technologies, which have moved in different and contradictory directions. The development of the Web has made it both more appealing to some and less appealing to others as time goes on. One zine editor argued that many independent publishers tend to see cutting-edge media as attractive (whether for economic or artistic reasons) and originally saw the Web as a meaningful alternative to print:

> "Over time, and probably quicker than for xerography or offset printing or other once-new technologies, the Web became saturated and overly technical. Zine publishers then re-evaluated print media and found it more flexible and malleable, or at least with the disadvantages outweighing the advantages."

Some zine editors suggested, too, that their views may relate to a generational gap (since they are old enough to have been self-publishing since pre-Internet days) and that younger people who grew up with the Web might embrace it more readily.

Conclusions

All in all, these once and present zine editors were ambivalent toward the prospects and realities of online publication. They valued the Web's ability—through links, e-mails, guestbooks, and other forms of participation—to "incorporate the audience into the act and build, rather than limit, the size of the community (...) The implicit rhetoric is of inclusion."[29] But these functions are, in large part, peripheral to the actual activity of publishing content. And, the technological and economic features of this new media that "most fascinate the futurists" have less influence over their decision to adopt or not adopt it than do social and cultural ones.[30] Even the binary choice typically offered by technological diffusion—adoption or rejection—contradicts the evidence in these interviews that zine editors' attitudes toward and uses of Web publishing move in multiple trajectories.

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[29] In Smith, *op cit.*

[30] In David Paul Nord, "The ironies of communication technology: Why predictions of the future so often go wrong," in *The Cresset* 49 (March 1986), pp. 15-20.

Most self-publishers agreed that despite the uncertain success of its publicity function, the Internet can play a significant complementary role to print. However, they added that online work not only has failed to replace, substitute or dim their enthusiasm for paper publishing but also has, perhaps, even renewed it. Whether or not they now have a Web site, the members of this group, some of whom see themselves as descendents of Paine's radical printing tradition, hesitated to make any predictions about the prospects of online publishing for democratic communications—and so do I. Reflecting the paradox that Nord describes, the Internet is not so new as we imagine it, yet still so new that we cannot really imagine it.

It is ironic, too, that these self-publishers believe the evolution of e-zines has helped them reevaluate and re-value print. They think other people may do the same: "Because of all this Web stuff, people might see that zines published by print are different, and go back to that. A lot of people like to do whatever stands out, to go against the tide." They speculated that the print zine movement may be merely dormant, due to the historical confluence of difficult distribution and the fact that people are momentarily enamored with e-publishing experiments (possibly siphoning new blood towards the Web which could otherwise reinvigorate independent printing). Zines "flow in and out of the public eye but they have always been there in great number," one editor said. It seems safe to say that printed matter probably won't become obsolete so long as it corresponds better than bytes to the social, affective, and aesthetic orientations of those publishers and readers who comprise the alternative zine community.

While the issues explored here focus on producers in this interpretive community, they also involve readers and reading—even though readers are often producers (and vice versa) in the DIY world of zines. Further research in reader response might be helpful in confirming my speculation that interactivity, two-way communication and participation are related more to how people use a medium in a particular social context than to any inherent, universal features of the medium itself.

This study indicates that the earlier predictions of technological enthusiasts overrated and underrated the revolutionary implications of Web publishing at the same time.[31] Features and uses vary, but no technology is inherently more democratic than any other. Some lamented commercialization and congestion on the Internet—and may seek to deflate the hyperbolic celebrations evident in the quotes from *WIRED* and the *New York Times* that introduced this study. But these self-publishers nonetheless appreciated how this new medium has offered an additional avenue for independent publishers and readers, potential and actual, to find one another at a time when other means of mass promotion and distribution have stagnated or dried up.

In addition to suggesting that interactivity may be linked more to mentality than to technology, these interviews indicate that the Internet does not offer wholly better tools for expressing individuality, fostering diversity or building community than the ones self-publishers already had. The situation is much more paradoxical than that. The Web may help promote global pamphleteers such as these zine producers and help them commune with like minds throughout the world, but not autonomously or unequivocally. Online publishing is itself rooted in the real, offline world and enmeshed in a network of social, cultural, technological, economic and political relationships that also includes print, letter-writing, face-to-face conversation and other older means of communication.

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Grappling with Gendered Modernity: The Spectacle of Miss World in the News
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First Place Faculty Paper Award
Critical & Cultural Studies Division
AEJMC Conference, Miami, FL
August 2002

Abstract

Grappling with Gendered Modernity: The Spectacle of Miss World in the News

Hailed as a symbol of India's enthusiasm for globalization, the 1996 Miss World beauty contest, which was held in Bangalore, a cosmopolitan city in South India, soon evolved into a media spectacle when conservative organizations, feminist activists, and political parties launched public protests against the pageant. Seizing upon the global pageant as a fertile media event space, Miss World's commercial sponsors and protest groups voiced their opinions in Indian news media on globalization, cultural imperialism, sexism, perils of modernization, and ideal Indian femininity. Examining intertextual intersections among gender and discourses of class mobility, tradition, and modernity that were woven into news narratives on Miss World, this article brings to the foreground the ordering and framing practices of the Times of India, one of the nation's most reputable newspapers. Deconstructing the Times of India's visual and written representations of Miss World, the paper focuses attention on the ways in which rhetorical practices of modernity, emerging from authoritative sites of power, tacitly structure the semiotics of gender and class in the discursive regimes of globalization. Historicizing the analysis, the conclusion identifies the legacies of colonialism and nationalism that continue to shape the contours of gendered media spectacles in postcolonial India.

GRAPPLING WITH GENDERED MODERNITY: THE SPECTACLE OF MISS WORLD IN THE NEWS

On November 23, 1996 the live performance of the Miss World pageant was staged for an audience of 16,000 at the state-owned Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore, a cosmopolitan city in South India. Beauty contestants from 89 nations, reputed folk and classical dancers and musicians, and a parade of richly decorated "ethnic" elephants entertained reporters, celebrity guests from the fashion and film industries, corporate business leaders, and the sea of ticketholders who had gathered to witness the event. Welcoming the audience to Miss World's first performance in South Asia, host Ruby Bhatia Bali animatedly invoked India's colonial history to hail the pageant as a trope for new egalitarian partnerships in a global economy:

> Welcome to India, the land of the old and the new! The 1996 Miss World in Bangalore will convey the magic that can happen when East and West come together. Unlike the days of the British Raj when India was subordinate, the West is now looking to India as an equal partner. Let's show the world how we Indians have the best of both worlds--the modern and the traditional.

In contrast to Bhatia's optimism and the dazzling pantheon of multicultural femininity being displayed on the illuminated stage, the hundreds of heavily armed guards patrolling the shrouded darkness of the stadium grounds signaled the grim specter of the state's masculinized power and authority. Blurring forcefully the boundaries between private/public, capital/state, and leisure/work, the silent and hypervisible bodies of the guards reminded the audience that unexpected violence could erupt at any moment. Under the leadership of Bangalore's police commissioner, S. C. Burman, over 5000 armed law enforcement personnel including state police, Central Armed Reserve Force soldiers, seven divisions of the elite Rapid Action Force, two all-women police platoons, and a bomb fighting squad created a thick blanket of security for the pageant.

To unpack the puzzling question of why a formidable array of state security personnel would be stationed at a seemingly banal entertainment event, media critics would have to shift their attention from the orchestrated order of Miss World's rehearsed rituals to the scenes of disorder that exploded on the streets outside the walls of the stadium. Standing a few feet away from a statue of Mahatma Gandhi on a busy street in a commercial area, CNN correspondent Anita Pratap relayed news of possible suicide attempts by conservative women activists who had declared their intentions to sabotage Miss World minutes before the performance was scheduled to begin. In the immediate vicinity of the stadium, over a hundred local and international reporters and photojournalists dodged imminent violence and danger to record the turbulent protests of activists expressing their opposition to the pageant. During the performance of Miss World, opponents of the pageant blocked traffic, deflated the tires of state-owned buses, and threw stones at the doors of the stadium while police fired teargas shells and used lathis (long wooden sticks) to restore order. The proliferating print and electronic media images that chronicled the troubled story of Miss World's live performance in South Asia were only a few pages in the closing chapter of a prolonged saga of conflict that began four months before November 23, 1996.

The carnivalistic spectacle, which emerged in the context of Miss World's arrival in South Asia, underscored vividly the mass media's role as the primary conduit for a range of institutions and groups--political, economic, social, and activist--to disseminate cultural myths and narratives that support their agendas in the public sphere. Given the context of modern democracy where the media serve as coordinative sites for multiple discourses emerging from social movements, the state, and capitalistic entities to converge, it is not surprising that specific events with potential for public-sphere representation become fertile fodder to craft narratives that conform to media guidelines for consumable newsworthy products. In the United States, for instance, politicians, lawyers, activists, and government officials strategically deployed mediated spectacles like the Anita Hill case, the O.J. Simpson trial, Princess Diana's death, and the Clinton-Lewinsky affair to generate public debates on sexual harassment, domestic violence, eating disorders, state-sponsored racism, and the privileges of celebrity stardom (Hinds and Stacey, 2001; McLaughlin, 1998; Steiner, 1999). Documenting the hectic, circus-like atmosphere that surrounded the O.J Simpson spectacle, McLaughlin (1998) writes that the drama of the O.J. trial was an exemplary illustration of "media event space," a chaotic cultural domain that became filled with the politics of special-interest groups eager to harness staged events/scandals/public figures as vehicles to attract media attention. Much like these fractious public moments in the West where cultural politics hinged on the seductive representational power of media spectacles, the 1996 Miss World pageant in India also evolved into a prime example of media event space.

Illustrating the symbiotic inseparability of politics, spectacle, and media culture in India's postcolonial landscape, the 1996 Miss World in Bangalore rapidly became implicated within multiple discursive contexts. Soon after newspapers began covering the initial bursts of protests against the pageant in August, local organizers discovered that they could no longer control the limits and possibilities of this beauty ritual's meanings. Organizers, sponsors, and protest groups transformed the global pageant into a lucrative semiotic platform to launch macro-level debates on globalization, social change, and the preservation of traditional national culture. Seizing upon Miss World as a symbolic news vessel, numerous activist groups, politicians, and corporate executives voiced their opinions in the media on cultural imperialism, sexism, modernization, ideal Indian femininity, and the disturbing shifts in the priorities of a developing nation where a vast number of its women still lived in extreme poverty. Examining the intersections among gender and discursive regimes of class mobility, tradition, and modernity that were woven into news narratives on the Miss World controversy, this article brings to the foreground the "judging, selecting, ordering, and framing practices" (McLaughlin, 1998, p. 74) of The Times of India, a prominent English-language newspaper that is widely recognized for its "reliability and reputation for balance and fairness" (Shah, 1994, p. 8).

Although the readership of metropolitan English-language newspapers represents a small fraction of India's population, the emergence and development of the vibrant news industry within the historical trajectories of colonialism, nationalism, and postcolonial democracy has ensured that the Indian press today is not just a "mediator between state and civil society, but an important part of the apparatus of governance itself" (Dhawan, 1991, p. 33). State officials, legislators, activists, politicians, and more recently, global and local corporations rely on the urban press to influence public opinion among the educated middle and upper classes, a key socioeconomic bloc in India's path toward globalization (Shah, 1994). Describing the mainstream English-language press as an institution of elite culture, Joseph and Sharma (1994) write:

> The power of the English-language press is enhanced by its class composition. It is run by the same dominant group to which it primarily caters...the traditional definitions of news, accepted by the mainstream English-language press in India, conform to the generally liberal, yet elitist values espoused by the relatively affluent, upwardly mobile, university educated, upper caste urban male. (p. 17)

How did news photographs in the Times of India represent Miss World's participants and protest groups' campaigns? How did the newspaper appropriate the female body and female sexuality, particularly alluring elements in the constitution of visual spectacle, to signify tradition and modernity? How did protesters' critiques of international pageants and global modernity hold up against Miss World in the Times of India's textual ladder of newsworthiness? What editorial strategies did the newspaper pursue in subtly framing stories on the voices that challenged Miss World's legitimacy as a symbol of women's empowerment? In processing the abundance of raw cultural material the pageant generated, what subject positions did the Times of India offer to Indian women? Reiterating the pivotal role of gender in the semiotics of modernization projects, this paper argues that women's bodies, behaviors, and subjectivities become powerful ideological symbols that the news media deploy to render complex ideas of progress, tradition, and social change intelligible for their audiences. Focusing attention on the ways in which rhetorical practices of modernity, emerging from authoritative sites of power, tacitly structured news representations of Miss World, this paper's interpretive goal seeks a judicious return to cultural studies' originary allegiances to a progressive politics of gender and class.

The first section of the paper dwells on the contributions of my research on news and gender to feminist cultural studies. The second section outlines the study's methodology and provides a brief quantitative overview of the analysis. The third section identifies the chief protagonists of the 1996 Miss World controversy in India. Foregrounding the robust intertextuality of contemporary media culture, the fourth and fifth sections deconstruct the Times of India's photographic and written representations of Miss World. Historicizing the analysis, the concluding section argues that the discursive inheritances of colonialism and nationalism are subtly implicated in contemporary Indian media representations of gender and globalization.

Moving news from margin to center: Gender and cultural studies

In examining news discourses on gender and global modernity in India, this essay builds on scholars' recent efforts to rejuvenate the study of news as a mythic textual narrative that is structured by the cultural politics of gender, race, and sexuality (Carter, Branston, & Allan, 1998; Fair, 1996; Meyers, 1997; Polumbaum & Weiting, 1999; Rakow & Kranich, 1991). Over the past three decades, numerous cultural studies critics have documented the ways in which gender shapes media practices, institutions, and audiences, however, fiction and fantasy, rather than news or public affairs programs, remain the central objects of inquiry in the exploding industry of research on "low culture." The feminist impulse to study gender in relation to popular culture rather than news can be traced to British feminists' early entry into the field at the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies. Questioning the valorization of news, a masculine cultural form, over devalued popular culture genres that were associated with the figure of the "housewife," early feminist work sought to politicize the private sphere as a crucial site for women's negotiations with patriarchy (Long, 1991). Describing feminist research on soap operas, romance novels, and women's magazines as a decisive intervention, Stuart Hall (1992) wrote, "As a thief in the night might, it [feminism] broke in, interrupted, made an unseemly noise, seized the time, and crapped on the table" (p. 282).

Without diminishing feminists' pioneering efforts to frame female sexuality as a legitimate problematic in media studies, this project steps away from the disciplinary focus on popular culture to revive the study of news as a key apparatus for the constitution of elite cultural identities. Ignoring journalistic texts when the news media symbolize discursive spaces where audiences expect to be addressed as citizens rather than as consumers implies that the objectivist epistemology of news continues to maintain its hegemony with regard to gender. In the absence of sustained cultural studies work on gender and news, early paradigms of research on sexist stereotypes, which assume that the media distort the "pure" reality of women's authentic experiences, have become the dominant (almost canonical) modes of knowledge production in this arena (Steeves, 1987; Van Zoonen, 1994). Drawing inspiration from historicized and dialectical approaches to texts that question the limits of linear models of media culture, feminists can document the fluid, intertextual, and contradictory articulations of gender in the news (Bird & Dardenne, 1988; Campbell 1995; Carey, 1986; Hall, 1975; Hartley, 1982; Zelizer, 1992). Finally, this project's emphasis on globalization and media culture in South Asia propels cultural studies to move beyond its preoccupation with the First World.

Decoding gender in media texts: News and textual analysis

Relying on textual-visual analysis, a methodological tool that is uniquely poised to unearth the profound embeddedness of media texts within the cultural politics of gender, transnational capital, and nationalist ideology, this study unravels the encoding of the 1996 Miss World in Indian news. Rejecting the project of excavating unadulterated forms of truth that lay dormant in media narratives, textual analysis enables scholars to deconstruct the semiotics of gender in the symbolic conventions and sign systems that underlie the production of news (Denzin, 1994; Hartley, 1982; Schwandt, 1994). Fortified by interpretive insights from semiotic, feminist, and Marxist critiques of commodity culture, techniques of textual analysis facilitate a critique of news photographs and stories as discursive elements in a larger system of intersecting representations in the popular domain. Following cultural historian Robert Darnton, who advocates an ethnographic approach to the historical archive, this study's research on the Times of India attempts to "tease meaning" from the newspaper's content by engaging actively with the "surrounding world of significance" (Darnton, 1984, p. 6). While the article accords a central place to select photos, captions, stories, headlines, and columns in the Times of India from September 18 (date of the first large-scale protest march) to November 25, 1996 (two days after the pageant's live performance), the analysis engages actively discourses on Miss World in other media texts to chart the relations among different domains of signification.

First, however, the sheer quantity and intensity of Miss World's news representations that saturated Bangalore's public sphere reflected the durable and resilient texture of the pageant as a media spectacle. Recounting memories of his grueling work pressure during the Miss World controversy, one young Deccan Herald journalist remarked, "It was the most exhausting and exciting time for me. I was always running on the street, either to an event or to my office. My boss gave me two days off after the pageant to recover." Photographs and stories of the pageant stayed on the front pages of English-language and vernacular newspapers for over two months. The editorial sections of newspapers expanded to accommodate the hundred of letters that poured in from citizens, special-interest groups, and politicians opposing or supporting the pageant. In an effort to organize and process the volatile politics that surrounded Miss World, the Times of India, Deccan Herald, and the Indian Express produced special weekend features to showcase beauty contestants, well-known columnists' opinions on Miss World, and protest groups' writings. To compete with the frenzied pace of Miss World's event planners and protest groups' daily activities, two reporters and two photojournalists at the Times of India were asked to abandon their routine beats (crime, courts, and lifestyle) so they could assist their colleagues in covering city politics.

During the ten weeks in 1996 that this study emphasizes, the Times of India carried 127 news photos—75 of these illustrated Miss World contestants and a range of the pageant's supporters while 57 supplemented news of protest activities. The newspaper carried 252 stories on Miss World, and 106 of these were front-page stories. Stories that described and positively endorsed the staging of Miss World in Bangalore--features on contestants, pre-pageant events, plans for the event, columns--outnumbered stories on the opposition to the pageant--marches, speeches, silent vigils, columns--by about a 1.5 to 1 margin (113 to 76), and there were more front-page stories that favored the pageant. Sources supporting the pageant were more visible and frequent, and the newspaper cited a wider range of sources (in twelve categories), who aligned their sympathies with the pageant's organizers. My qualitative analysis adds "depth and detail" to the above data by tracking the contextual meanings of strategically chosen examples of media content (Shah, 1994, p. 8). Unlike most analyses of media content that are limited to the text alone, the views of subjects and media producers enrich this essay's discussion. Drawing on interviews with newspaper, magazine, and television professionals and key members of activist organizations, the conclusion illuminates the institutional imperatives that shape news representations of global media events.

Global rituals, local rebellions

The recent staging of global pageants in developing nations like Thailand, Peru, Namibia, Mexico, and Trinidad is an integral part of the larger process of economic and cultural globalization that has intensified over the last two decades. In the case of India, the national government accelerated the arrival of globalization when it launched economic reforms in the late eighties that were designed to promote a free-market economy and facilitate the entry of multinationals. By the time the Miss World contest arrived in India, Kentucky Fried Chicken, Barbie dolls, and MTV were already being marketed to the burgeoning urban Indian middle-classes. The landscape of the Indian beauty industry, which used to be dominated by Lakme and a host of lesser-known domestic companies, is now punctured by the loud voices of global cosmetic firms. Revlon, Oriflame, Avon, L'Oreal, and Benckiser are today clamoring for the attention of the "New Indian Woman," a modern subject who is urged by touring supermodels (Naomi Campbell, Claudia Schiffer, and Cindy Crawford) to shed vestiges of her Third Worldness so she can acquire the envied sophistication of her Western counterparts. Mushrooming beauty parlors and ubiquitous supermarket cosmetic counters replete with attendants in white coats index the consumerist modes through which global modernity interpellates Indian women.

Although dominant media discourses have emphasized the seamless enthusiasm among India's business and consumer communities for the progress promised by globalization, not all sections of the Indian public have greeted global commodity culture with the same sense of anticipation and excitement. The rumblings of protest that began in August 1996 soon after Indian media announced that Miss World would be held in Bangalore snowballed into organized opposition and special-interest group mobilization during the months of October and November. Marking a hitherto unprecedented flurry of public protests in Bangalore, conservative women's groups, feminist activists, and politicians organized demonstrations, called for strikes, performed street plays, and lectured at women's colleges. Scripted into a tale of contentious debate, Miss World's media event space in the Times of India featured the following main actors:

Founders, local organizers, and local sponsors: The founders of Miss World, an English couple, Eric and Julia Morley, launched the global pageant in 1951. Miss World was held in the United Kingdom for thirty-nine years before it was shipped to Eastern Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia. In 1996, the Indian celebrity icon and film actor Amitabh Bachchan's fledgling media production and distribution firm Amitabh Bachchan Corporation Ltd. (ABCL) assisted the Morleys in organizing the pageant in India. Sponsored mainly by Godrej, one of India's oldest manufacturers of soaps, food and hair products, and office furniture, Miss World's televised version in 1996 owed its financial support to Mastercard, Citibank, Coca Cola, Euopcar, Omega Watches, Modi Revlon, Lakme Cosmetics, Air India, and Welcom Group of Hotels.

State and City Government Officials: Government endorsement of Miss World included officials' public appearances at events and the promise of free access to state property and security services. Accepting Amitabh Bachchan's invitation, the state of Karnataka's Chief Minister J. H. Patel agreed to preside over the inaugural news conference of Miss World. With the permission of the Karnataka State Tourism Board, Miss World's opening news conference was held at the Vidhana Soudha, the colonial State Legislature Building. The State Tourism Board also offered ABCL the open-air Chinnaswamy Cricket Stadium as a venue to hold the pageant's live performance. Furthermore, when street protests in Bangalore turned violent, the state police commissioner supervised massive security arrangements to protect citizens and Miss World's participants and organizers.

The Spastics Society of India: In a much publicized move, ABCL corporation decided that 10% of the company's profits from hosting Miss World would be donated to the local State of Karnataka branch of the National Spastics Society, a non-profit association that assists poor and low-income children and adults affected by cerebral palsy. Founded in 1972 in Mumbai, the Spastics Society's 18 regional centers in India offer free therapy, medical consultancies, and special education for disabled children and their caregivers. (I use the label "spastic" although it is highly stigmatizing because the Indian media in 1996 used the term to describe children affected by cerebral palsy.)

Conservative activists: Kina Narayana Sashikala, leader of Mahila Jagran Samiti and Premila Nesargi, member of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) were the primary voices of the conservative protest against Miss World. Arguing that the pageant violated the purity of Indian culture, Mahila Jagran Samiti and the BJP filed a series of petitions against Miss World at the Karnataka High Court. One petition requested the court to charge ABCL for the elaborate state security arrangements. Other petitions opposed the staging of a commercial event in a state-owned stadium and requested the banning of the bikini show and advance censorship of performances that called for "indecent exposure of women." Joining forces with Sashikala and Nesargi, other community groups advocated for restrictions on the sale of alcohol at Miss World's charity dinners. The high court permitted ABCL to hold the pageant at the stadium, but the organization was ordered to repay Rs. 1.5 crores to the state for law and order services. In deference to the court, ABCL agreed to monitor beauty contestants' public decency, shift the swimsuit competition to Seychelles, and serve liquor only at small private parties. Feminist activists: Mahila Jagruthi, a grass roots women's group, Vimochana, a sixteen-year-old feminist advocacy coalition, and former Member of Parliament Subhashini Ali's All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) were three key organizers of the feminist protest that ranged from peaceful marches to more violent and disruptive actions. State police arrested Mahila Jagruthi activists after they barged into an upscale Godrej showroom and smeared consumer goods with cowdung and tar. Joining hands with the Karnataka Rajya Raithu Sangha (KRRS), the local farmer's special interest group, Mahila Jagruthi, Vimochana, and AIDWA also organized large-scale protests with village women. Feminists' fragile alliance with the farmers' group disintegrated soon after the leader Prof. Nanjundaswamy announced that he was willing to support conservative groups' religious/moral agenda against Miss World.

Animating modernity, disciplining dissent: The visual register of Miss World

If modernity is defined as a structure of feeling, a deeply "felt sense of the quality of life" that permeates a culture's imaginative consciousness (Williams, 1975, p. 63), the incandescent sensation of the visual marks profoundly the modernizing fever that has swept urban India in the wake of economic liberalization policies. Anticipating India's current love affair with television, the utopian mythologies of forties and fifties Indian films narrativized the nation's euphoric transition from an era of colonial repression to postcolonial independence. Initially, in the late fifties and early sixties, when state-owned Indian television was deployed primarily as an instrument for rural development and scientific modernization, its reach was limited. Didactic and dull programming on local governance, health, agriculture, and science was the staple fare of television. Gradually, during the eighties and nineties, with the proliferation of cable and satellite channels, the explosion in sales of television sets, and the spread of consumerist culture among the urban middle-classes, Indian television's mesmerizing images began to authorize the reworking of the nation from a quasi-socialist state into a promising and eager candidate for the multinational capital of globalization.

Guided by global television's relentless mission to bring consumerist modernity into Indian audiences' living rooms, the terrain of print culture has also shifted to consolidate the regime of the visual as the quintessential vehicle for Western style cosmopolitanism. Polychromatic discourses of visual titillation in the glossy new magazines that flooded the nineties' market--India Today Plus, Verve, Cosmopolitan, Elle, and New Woman—prepare the burgeoning Indian middle and upper-classes to become modern subjects by participating in the culture of commodity fetishism. Anxious to soften their stodgy image and ensure their long-term economic viability in India's new and robust climate of visual modernity, major metropolitan newspapers more than doubled their investments over the past decade in the production of visual imagery (increased hiring of photographers and cartoonists, acquisition of advanced technology, and greater allocation of editorial space for images). Documenting the design elements that indexed the emergence of an aesthetic of modernism and the simultaneous rise of the market-oriented newspaper, Barnhust and Nerone (2001) write that the ascent of the front-page photograph signaled the consolidation of modern journalism's empirical authority and the "acceptance of photographers as partners in journalism instead of merely as artists" (p. 201). Paying homage to the visual order of modernity, photographs of the Miss World controversy in the Times of India's Bangalore edition represented a milestone for the newspaper's record of visual illustrations for a single story. Compellingly coding the semiotic boundaries of the global pageant's meanings for the busy and casual browser of the newspaper, photographs of the Miss World saga accounted for 40% of the newspaper's visual output in 1996.

In the Times of India's photojournalistic rhetoric, Miss World was dramatically anchored to the kaleidoscopic hues and multicolored prosperity of the modern while protest groups were consigned to the routine and drab world of gray, quotidian news. Mirroring the practices of newspapers across the globe that gradually move towards a full integration into the world of color, the Times of India in 1996 printed color photos only on the front-pages of its different sections. Within the intricate order of editorial images and text that organize a finely calibrated hierarchy of newsworthiness, both prominence and color coalesced around Miss World's organizers, founders, and contestants. Brief news reports of simmering resentment against the pageant coincided with the publication of the pageant's schedule of events, however, the Times of India's first Miss World photograph that appeared on the right corner of the front page (a prime location) linked the pageant to the confident aura of masculine celebrity and the affirmative power of the state. Resplendent in "patriotic garb," actor Amitabh Bachchan and Bangalore chief minister J.H. Patel, who were dressed in white khadi kurtas, long handspun cotton shirts that evoke nostalgic memories of Mahatma Gandhi's anti-colonial struggle, shook hands to signal the productive collaboration of state and private enterprise in forging globalization projects. Accentuating the patriotic flavor of the two men's white clothing, the Indian flag with its brilliant green, white, and orange colors lingered in the periphery. Similarly, three front-page color photographs also renewed the vitality of Miss World as a model project for fostering harmonious partnerships among the Indian state, local business, and multinational capital. Signifying India's newly resuscitated postcolonial relations with the West, these images revealed Bachchan, Julia and Eric Morley, chief minister J.H. Patel, state tourism officials, and business executives from Godrej, Revlon, and Citibank arrayed on the stately green gardens of the Vidhana Soudha, the palatial brick red building that housed the State Legislature.

Color photographs and illustrations that recorded preparations for Miss World on the front pages of the business and entertainment sections wove the pageant into dynamic narratives of progress and technological advancement. Two large news photos of construction work on the stage at Bangalore's Chinnaswamy stadium showed several men suspended precariously on elaborate scaffolding outlined clearly across the blue sky. One caption noted that the "magnificent spectacle" of the 1996 Miss World would unfold on the 110ft x 60ft stage, a massive multi-level structure that ensured unprecedented excitement for the 1996 Miss World's live audience because previous performances of the pageant were packaged exclusively for television. In vivid contrast to these images of architectural modernity, the caption to another small photograph of the crumbling Qutub Minar, a historic seventeenth century tower, on the same page drew the reader's attention to the stagnant backwardness of the Archaeological Society of India, which had denied ABCL permission to shoot images of beauty contestants posed in front of the monument.

Several striking images of Miss World blended seamlessly with Bangalore's coveted reputation as one of the world's leading suppliers of knowledge-based services, a thriving technopolis and Third World "Silicon Plateau" of cheap skilled labor for scores of multinational firms including IBM, Intel, Microsoft, and Oracle. Structured by a masculine narrative of high technology, these images projected the pageant's potential to escalate the momentum of the city's forward-moving urban energy. Three young men dressed in blue jeans were huddled around a glowing computer screen that displayed a brilliant orange graphic of the India map in one photograph while the caption noted that Bangalore's "seasoned software experts" were planning to project high-resolution images of the nation's natural and historic "treasures" on stage, an aesthetic innovation that would lend a patriotic flavor to Miss World's visual spectacle. Hinting that the greatest uncertainties in staging large-scale pageants hinged often on the unpredictable performances of women contestants, who turned out to be fallible humans, the caption to one photograph of Richard Steinmetz (the white South African male host of Miss World's live show), surrounded by blue electric generators and gray audio, video, and lighting equipment, claimed that Miss World's combination of "spanking new" technology and international talent dovetailed with the city's prevailing goals to become the "geographic pulse" of the global information economy.

Echoing the representational styles of fashion and lifestyle magazines, other large Times of India color photographs that harnessed the allure of young, feminine beauty disturbed the fragile boundaries that separate hard and soft news and photojournalism and commercial imagery. A series of front-page images in the main section that chronicled beauty contestants' participation in colorful rituals and performances invited the newspaper's middle-class reader to momentarily enter the glamorous world of the privileged Indian upper-classes. Close-up and mid-shot photographs of beauty contestants' arrival at Bangalore's airport and at Windsor Manor hotel's ostentatious welcome reception emulated the visual aesthetic of soap operas and personal care advertisements that encourage consumers' intimate identification with their female characters. Dressed in form-fitting bright purple and red clothing that flattered their slim beauty, two wide-eyed young women from Holland and Ireland with long, flowing hair stared warmly into the camera as they waved to their imaginary audiences. Posed pictures of two or three young female contestants flanking an older man—wealthy industrialist Vijay Mallya, South Indian actor Rajanikanth, and Amitabh Bachchan—reproduced the gender/class/age asymmetries that structure the discourses and practices of sexuality in entertainment culture where an older man's intimate proximity to multiple feminine trophies of success serves as a vehicle for provoking male desire. Creating a similar spectacle of feminized beauty for the male gaze, although with a radically different representational technique that emphasized distance and inaccessibility, another image showed Miss Aruba and Miss Israel sitting cross-legged in chairs on a small stage while a crowd of eager male photojournalists carrying their cameras circled the two women.

The ubiquitous "lovely to see you" pearly-white smile, a gendered bodily adornment and welcome convention that evokes the "analogy of family warmth" to interpellate the viewing public, rarely left the faces of beauty contestants in news photographs (Holland, 1998, pp. 26-27). Patricia Holland (2000) argues that the fantastic excess of the pretty white woman's relaxed, friendly smile, a modern representational trope of middle-class femininity that pervaded the popular press of Britain in the late sixties, indexed the dramatic softening of hard news through the assertion of the female body as spectacle. Outnumbering front-page images in the Deccan Herald and the Hindu, fifty-five Times of India color photographs that appeared over three weeks, exhibited Miss World's participants attending pre-pageant celebrations, charity dinners, and welcome events hosted by local celebrities. In over ninety percent of these illustrations, well-groomed smiling young women, colorful figures who typically saturate the semiotic world of Femina, a glossy magazine that has reinvented itself as the training manual for aspiring international beauty queens, conveyed a feminized "entertainment" rather than an "informational address" in the newspaper's front pages. In the midst of the growing protest against Miss World on the streets of Bangalore, one vivid mid-shot image displayed a smiling Miss India and Miss Ireland "brimming with confidence despite the explosive atmosphere created by protesters" on the lawns of the Maurya Sheraton hotel. An eye-catching visual feast that covered the entire front page of a weekend special feature on Miss World contained ten small images of Bangalore's business and social elites accompanying beaming beauty contestants. Claiming the inseparability of color, beautiful women, and the happy smile in visual images to be a "common sense" professional technique, one Times of India photo editor remarked, "How else would you show modern and beautiful women?" Revealing the epistemic force of the beauty codes that govern the realm of the feminine in India's public culture, Madhu Bhushan, a slim, young and attractive feminist, confessed that she, rather than several older feminists who were also involved deeply in the protest movement, chose to reject numerous requests from journalists for posed photographs.

Traveling from the newspaper's lifestyle pages into the front page, these smiling young women in the Times of India's premium editorial space, were surrounded by a wider discursive regime of media culture that persistently utilizes the trope of smiling femininity, combined with a rebelliousness linked to unconstrained canons of dress, to signal India's openness to the seductive spell of consumerist modernity. Reaching out to the urban middle-classes, a key economic bloc whose purchasing power fueled India's receptiveness to globalization, most Internet versions of Indian news magazines regularly feature a smiling young woman model or celebrity costumed in Western clothing on the first page. The cover of the first issue of India Today Plus, an upscale lifestyle publication (produced by the more serious news-focused India Today) that caters to the affluent transnational class of national and diasporic Indian consumers, featured a smiling young woman with deep red lips, dressed provocatively in a tight white tank top. Distilling in grand fashion the pleasures of modern material abundance, this mascot of modernity flaunted the boldness of her exposed skin while seated in a flashy red and white classic Chevrolet car. Just as news media in the United States offer the shriveled body of the desexualized African woman with her flaccid breasts to map the spectacle of famine in the Third World (Fair, 1996), Indian media embody the passionate abandon of global modernity through their displays of transgressive Indian women packaged within the aesthetics of Western femininity. More significantly, the exuberant feminine smile that circulates visibly in urban media culture had to resurface as institutional practice if India wanted to become a modern capitalist nation that appreciated the competitive global value of excellent service to the consumer. Sharing his difficulties in training Indian service staff at airlines, five-star hotels, and retail outlets to be pleasant and responsive, the director of Aditi Communications (formerly a TV anchor) lamented the traditional obstacles that hindered the cultivation of a First World corporate culture in India, "Some Indian women think it's wrong to smile at strangers because that sends a sexual message and the men say it's weak and womanly to smile all the time. I teach them the modern business meaning of the smile."

The production of modernity in Asia in the era of globalization, as Louisa Schein (2000) writes, encompasses paradoxical impulses to turn the gaze outward in pursuit of a fetishized cosmopolitan West and at the same time to also retreat inward in a nostalgic search for authentic local/national culture. Schein's observations on China's "almost obsessive" consumption of the West ranging from "dishwashers to divorce" hold true for urban India's frenzied fascination for the "emblematic riches" of Western commodity culture (p. 22). Red and white Coca Cola signs on public streets, beauty pageants in girls' schools, women's fitness clubs, cybercafes, children's amusement arcades, and the plush buildings of multinational companies testify to the enthusiastic embrace of Western commodity culture. However, such a compulsive "mimicry" of the Occident in a postcolonial nation that has only recently liberated itself from the formal control of the West can also have the implicit effect, particularly for the urban Indian elite, who are haunted by histories of anti-colonial nationalism, of ranking India as stagnant and "humiliatingly backward" on a global scale of progress (pp. 22-23). To assuage the inferiority that is implicated in their adulation of the West, urban Indian elites have hence borrowed from and modified Orientalist discourses and practices of colonial modernity that exoticized and objectified India's pre-modern aristocratic, traditional, and rural cultures. Along with a ravenous appetite for all things American, an unprecedented boom in domestic travel and escalated consumption of traditional/folk products rivaling exports and international tourism characterizes the changing landscape of middle- and upper class lifestyle in the nineties in India.

Capturing these twin cross cutting currents of postcolonial modernity, beauty contestants' bodies in the Times of India's visual images operated as a lucrative semiotic canvas to purvey the fusion of the hegemonic Euroamerican global with a trendy local multiculturalism. Exhibiting the exotic appeal of combining Western beauty with native sartorial practices, several photographs showcased young white women in Western clothing with red dots on their foreheads, sandalwood garlands around their necks, and jasmine flowers in their braided hair attending traditional welcome rituals. In one photograph that appeared in mid-November, Miss Germany, Miss Sweden, and three Indian women film stars stood in the foyer of the Windsor Manor Hotel while twelve bridal couples from different Indian states adorned to the hilt in folk wedding garb serenaded the guests with song and dance. Captioned "Miss World is welcomed Indian style," another image displayed three European contestants in extravagant South Indian silk costumes frozen in traditional Indian dance poses. Forming a circular flame-shaped centerpiece on the first page of the city section, a creatively designed collage of photos showed women in different styles of saris lighting oil-filled lamps to inaugurate the celebration of the Deepavali festival of lights. Gaining maximum airtime on prime-time television, Miss World's sponsorship of an all-India handicrafts bazaar two days prior to the pageant was STAR News reporter Maya Sharma's chief assignment for that day.

The Times of India's prominent illustrations of Miss World contestants' local incorporation into narratives of national ethnic culture, part of ABCL's marketing strategy to sell the pageant, demonstrated the successful harnessing of tradition and difference to resonate with the local consumer fever for "ethnic chic." Indian newspaper representations of such feminized global multiculturalisms, that is, local manifestations of global culture, resonated with a host of global products and services that have also had to go ethnic in order to gain acceptance among Indian markets. The Indian visage of the white woman beauty contestant that was intended to sell the pageant as a hybrid ritual of East and West echoed eerily with yet another feminine tale of reincarnation in Asia—the ethnic transformation of the traveling Barbie doll. When Mattel's blond American Barbie doll first appeared in India in her standard mode, she did not "take the Indian market by storm" (Grewal, 1999, p. 804). However, as Grewal notes, soon after Barbie donned a sari and Mattel's advertising campaigns utilized the specificities of cultural practices in India to translate Barbie, sales among the urban middle-classes improved. Just as "the Americanness of Barbie and the standard of its white femininity" had to be reworked to target local audiences, the Times of India's images of white women contestants partaking of staged traditions reformatted Miss World for the new nationalist and cosmopolitan Indian consumer. As ethnic/national pride intersects with the logic of the market, traditional culture, which is "isolated and cherished in the realm of feminine leisure" (clothes, home furnishings, jewelry, cookbooks, toys, and cosmetics) is witnessing its "fragmentation into little bits that are suitable for exchange" (Schein, 2000).

Confined mostly to the outmoded grainy realm of black, white, and gray news, numerous images of protesting women demonstrators in the Times of India elaborated stories of anger, chaos, anonymity, and irrelevance. In contrast to the intimate close-up and mid-shot images of beauty contestants and sponsors, long-shot camera techniques crafted distant images of dark-skinned angry women in saris with their mouths wide open and their arms and hands raised in mid-air. Reinforcing readers' morning encounters with such newspaper images of uncontrollable, angry mobs, STAR TV's evening news featured its young, smiling and sophisticated reporter, Maya Sharma, standing close to the camera, speaking in her impeccable British-accented English (linked to cultural capital and class mobility) while scenes of women protesters shouting in Hindi and Kannada (vernacular languages associated with the rural/traditional) unfolded on the streets in the background. Much like the well-dressed Black anchors on local television news in the United States, who function as token symbols of orderly middle-class merit inserted into the relentless visual stream of Black criminality (Campbell, 1995), STAR TV's composed Maya Sharma offered her English-educated viewers a hegemonic representation of normalcy, an icon of civility surrounded by deviant and disorderly demonstrators. Pitting disruptive women protesters in opposition to the model Bangalore citizen, a responsible, middle-class woman, who struggled everyday to negotiate her traditional (mother, wife) and modern (career) roles, a front-page close-up image of an annoyed commuter's face in the Times of India was positioned immediately next to a large inchoate gathering of women holding banners and posters. Shown sitting in her car waiting for protesters to finish crossing the street, this image of a busy woman engaged in the routines of productive modernity was captioned "Bangalore's working people try to keep moving on the midst of upheaval." Portraying rural women as hapless and ignorant pawns of opportunist male politicians, one photograph of women farmers from the Chitradurga village silently listening to a Member of Parliament standing on a podium was captioned "Not the faintest idea what Miss World is about." Finally, with the exception of three photographs that clearly identified the names of protest groups and organizations, generalized caption terms like "anti-pageant protestors" and "demonstrators opposed to Miss World" that accompanied visual documentation of street protest conflated the agendas of feminists, progressive male activists, and conservative women's groups.

Acting in concert with corporate and state-sanctioned discourses of discipline and punishment, more than a third of Times of India's photographs of public protest in the vicinity of Bangalore elaborated a well-worn tale of a heroic and besieged police force struggling to maintain law and order amidst exploding hysteria. On the most benign level, several large photographs illustrating brief stories on protest groups' planned activities mapped out hectic police preparations that would ensure the smooth operation of Miss World's events and the minimum disruption of everyday public life in Bangalore. The newspaper's visual archive registered the arrival of special law enforcement forces from New Delhi, the organization of emergency training sessions for Bangalore's new police recruits, top police officials' inventory of weaponry, and soldiers' early morning reconnaissance of busy streets. Two sympathetic front-page human interest images of "fatigued and hardworking" police officers showed three men covered in blankets warming themselves around a campfire and police from New Delhi stood in a line in the darkness of the night next to an illuminated telephone booth awaiting their turn to call their families. Simulating the "before" and " after" technique of miraculous transformation that frames media discourses on home improvement and cosmetic surgery, one celebratory photograph of cars and pedestrians on the street outside the Chinnaswamy stadium, juxtaposed next to an image of a "Rasta Roko" (block the traffic) protest campaign, showed Bangalore's police commissioner and Amitabh Bachchan (founder of ABCL) congratulating uniformed men for successfully "shepherding traffic while protesters went berserk."

The most vivid and prominent images of protest in action, however, rarely revealed the hidden transcripts of demonstrators collaborating or working in their homes or offices to coordinate campaigns, rather, in persistently refracting narratives of dissent through activists' hostile encounters with police, these photographs quietly legitimized the authority of the state. Describing the excitement of working together, for instance, five feminists reported that newspapers, despite repeated phone calls from activists; ignored the historic alliance the protest movement against Miss World created among Bangalore's women's organizations—Vimochana, Manasa, Manini, Shakti, and Madhyam. The very same weekend supplement that showed Miss World contestants expressing their enthusiastic appreciation for Indian culture also carried photographs from the previous week of police reprimanding and hitting women protesters. The Times of India's newspaper of November 3, 1996 carried large pictures of dogs sniffing feminist protesters from Mahila Jagruthi and police frisking four women outside a Godrej showroom, which they had illegally entered and vandalized electronic appliances. Another Times of India news photo, which occupied almost the entire top half of the page, generated a script that cast the chief sponsor, Godrej Company, as violated victim and law enforcement as righteous rescuer. This image showed a washing machine, dishwasher, and answering machine, objects widely extolled in advertisements and lifestyle pages as coveted artifacts of modernity, smeared with tar and oil, labeled and neatly arranged on the floor of a police station. Parlaying the disciplinary effectiveness of the criminal justice system, a long shot front-page photo of four women, looking drab, grim and fatigued, with the gates of the city's prison forming the background, illustrated a story that was headlined "Arrested Mahila Jagruthi women sober after prison term."

Perpetuating an axiomatic notion of causality, which implied that violent protesters after all deserved censure and police brutality, the Times of India's visual lens of identification irrevocably meshed with the perspective of the powerful (the police, the Morleys, commercial sponsors, and ABCL). Rendered as tasteless, deviant, and out of control, women protesters entered the public sphere of the news as renegade citizens who lacked the willpower to comply with codes of middle-class decency. Observing a similar convergence of the reportorial outlook with the policing point of view in their analysis of television news coverage of "crack houses" during the Reagan government's "War against Drugs" campaign, Reeves and Campbell (1994) argue, "In the routine, ritualized visual imagery of TV crack coverage—the unstable, hand-held camera bounding from the back of police vans following gun-toting authorities as they break down the door of yet another crack house—journalism became an agent of the police, putting Americans, sitting in the comfort of their living rooms into the 'shoes of the police'" (p. 79). Guided by law enforcement's criminalization of dissent and corporate discourse on the exhilarating and irreversible course of progress, the Times of India's visual tales of protest consolidated subtly middle-class support for policies that favored globalization.

Perfect numbers, imperfect bodies, and repressive binaries: The textual archive

If a feminized trope of modernity in India's recently liberalized economy is the inviting emotional warmth of the color image, a more masculine sign of global modernity, one that claims unassailable truth-value as a product of exact science, is the number. Historically speaking, a grand discourse of scientific modernity, captured vividly in the fifties film Mother India, has always played a crucial role in launching modernization projects in postcolonial India. In the immediate aftermath of independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister and architect of a new future for the postcolonial nation, crafted a euphoric vision of an invulnerable India, breaking the shackles of obscurantist religion to strive toward a prosperous industrialization that would be fueled by the wonders of Western science and technology (Varma, 1998, pp. 25-64). Although reformist in its tone rather than revolutionary, the Nehruvian paradigm of scientific modernity, infused with idealism, advocated the harnessing of medicine, research, and large-scale industry by a socialist-democratic state to achieve social justice and economic equality. In Nehru's blueprint of modernity, the educated Indian middle-class, experts in Western science in one of the world's poorest nations, had a right to seek happiness and material comfort, but not at the expense of nation building and the welfare of the poor (Varma, 1998, p. 32). Despite the failures of Nehru's extended political leadership (17 years), which ultimately left intact the power of the elite English-educated urban classes, an audible grammar of service, ethics, and restrained materialism interrupted fifties and sixties public sphere debates on modernity.

Since the late eighties, the emphasis of state discourse has shifted from the purportedly isolationist, anti-Western, and socialist-oriented rhetoric of modern development (heavy industry, basic health, and universal literacy) to a new era of reconciliation with the West and integration into the global economy. Changing gears and dislodging pressing questions of vast economic disparity, the official machinery has begun fixating on information technology and open markets for commodities of Western material culture, extravagant luxuries for the majority of India's population, as the fuel to drive the engine of economic reform. Revealing the public policy process to be an immensely productive site for the creation of new national subjects, in the early nineties, prime minister Narasimha Rao and finance minister Manmohan Singh decided to dismantle inefficient state controls and closed market regulations, archaic obstacles that prevented India (unlike the prescience of neighboring China) from enjoying the benefits of globalization. Interpellated aggressively by new state liberalization policies as consumers, rather than as producers of scientific knowledge and goods that would raise the quality of life for the entire nation, the urban middle class found that its purchasing ability and consumerist thirst had to be configured as objective knowledge to court the attention of First World economies. The discursive production of the Indian "middle-class" in the arena of public policy, that is, the transformation of a contingent, chaotic and fluid social formation into a knowable category of classification thus began to demand authoritative modes of signification (Mukherjee, 2002).

Subduing the outmoded rhetoric of socialist science, the chameleon worlds of business and state politics plunged into the task of assessing, coding, and fixing middle-class consumer desire. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao's regime seized upon the science of polling as a key instrument to tame and define the unruly Indian middle-class. Renouncing the primacy of identities based in traditional tropes of the tribe (religious, regional, and ethnic affiliations), the state inserted the urban Indian middle-class into the modern subjective space of the consumer. In 1995 and 1996, Indian news and business media publicized with much fanfare the magical efficiency of the survey, a somewhat low profile and esoteric research technique that had largely circulated in the musty halls of development agencies and Indian academia. The front pages of reputable newspapers, newsmagazines, and business media announced ostentatiously the results of national surveys carried out by the National Council on Applied Economic Research (NCAER) and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CFI). Exulting in their discovery of the Indian market's potentially ravenous appetite for the accoutrements of modernity, the NCAER survey's "stunning statistics" in Business Today's cover story claimed to shatter the myth of a thrifty and unsophisticated South Asian middle class. Importing the pedantic language of First World marketing textbooks that devote entire chapters to the science of demographics and psychographics, the Business Today article offered detailed numerical biographies of the "very rich, the consuming classes, the social climbers, and the slow aspirants" (The new marketplace, 1996, p. 8). Feeding on the frenzy for numbers and labels, Indian television's advertising discourse has also begun fusing the rational flavor of polling data with heart-tugging emotional tales of nation, community, and family. Inundating the private sphere with the language of numbers, charts summarizing food nutrient values and scientific jargon touting appliances' cost-saving features claim that the modern woman, a scientific manager of her domestic space, had the ability to be a much more fun-loving and efficient wife and mother than her older mother-in-law (Munshi, 1998).

Demonstrating the manner in which the new science of modernity, in its freshly minted imported form as fetishized number, shapes by osmosis the boundaries of debate in the public sphere, multiple city and state-wide surveys measuring the opinions of the average woman became ABCL's "objective" weapons of defense to defuse the growing momentum of the protest movement. In the last week of October, just as Karnataka's high court was preparing to deliver verdicts in petitions that questioned ABCL's free use of state police and state-owned property, the corporation announced the results of its "womanist" poll, a survey carried out "by Indian women for Indian women" that proclaimed Bangalore's overwhelming support for beauty pageants and globalization. Flaunting the reputation of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), a prestigious academic establishment that was hired to carry out its research, ABCL invested in full-page newspaper advertisements, local television commercials, and a lavish press conference at the Windsor Manor hotel to persuade its reading public to accept the survey results. Trumpeting the IIM's name in its first sentence as an irrefutable badge of objective science, the first, rather plainly formatted advertisement headlined "90% of Bangalore Votes for Miss World 96" appeared on Times of India's third page. Judiciously erasing all traces of its self-serving origins, the first advertisement that had no mention of ABCL confirmed that a majority of the city's population agreed with the statement "Hosting Miss World will put the city and the state on the world map." A second, more ornate advertisement that explicitly interpellated Indian women readers appeared on the fifth page. Borrowing its emotional tour de force from state-sponsored media campaigns that were designed to forge nationalism among heterogeneous citizens divided by language, ethnicity, and religion, the second ABCL advertisement's randomly spliced portraits of Indian women dressed in ethnic clothes from different regions evoked the sentimental, patriotic refrain of "unity in diversity." Embedded in the center of this festive smorgasbord of feminine ethnicity, the text of the advertisement read "IIM Study: 89% of Bangalore's Women Say Yes to Miss World." Bestowing its stamp of "unbiased approval" and augmenting these advertisements' blatantly persuasive agenda, the Times of India reported ABCL's survey results on its front page. Mirroring the newspaper's editorial ordering, "hard news" articles confirming IIM's discovery of the astounding consensus in favor of Miss World peppered the front pages of the Indian Express, Deccan Herald, and the Hindu.

In an unexpected turn of events, ABCL's victory in the newly emergent discourse of numerical modernity did not remain unchallenged for very long. Igniting a controversy that ensued immediately after ABCL announced the results of Miss World: A Perception Study, the IIM accused the corporation of fraudulently using the institute's name on advertisements. Addressing reporters at a press conference, the director of the institute, Dr. K. R. S. Murthy, disavowed any official association with the survey and declared that the institute in particular objected to ABCL's practice of withholding its own name from advertisements to suggest that IIM had initiated and funded the survey. It was at this juncture, just as the scaffolding of support for Miss World began to disintegrate, that the Times of India decided to become an objective "third party" vendor of public opinion for its readers. Promoted widely on local television news as the "answer to the urgent crisis facing the city," anchors presented the Times of India's survey as a prudent intervention that would restore the sanctity of public opinion in a democracy. Promising to publish details of the survey process, the newspaper vowed to earn the trust of its readers by demystifying the complex science of polling.

Exactly six days after the IIM denounced ABCL's poll, in the wake of a semiotically ripe climate of controversy that propelled the mobilization of a survey as news practice, the Times of India's Sunday special feature revived spectacularly the idea of modern subjecthood as inextricably linked to the Western/masculine science of statistical enumeration. A dynamic composition of pictures, line drawings, text, and graphs on the first entire page of Times of India's special weekend feature organized synergistically the results of the newspaper's Miss World survey. Pictures of beauty contestants splashed the page with feminine color and enlivened the cool and abstract quality of the numerical data. Perched above two bar diagrams, a portrait of Rani Jeyraj, former Miss India and Bangalore's well-known representative in Miss World, that was captioned "India's hope" infused the page with local flavor. Numerical data that condensed a random sample's responses to question after question documented systematically consensus among the city's residents in favor of Miss World. Breaking down survey results by gender, the newspaper's numbers indicated that a majority of Bangalore's women (like the men) expressed a clear mandate against the protests while they agreed with the statement "We're proud that the city is hosting the pageant."

Dispersed in bits and pieces among credible signifiers of indisputable science, percentages that crystallized citizens' positive opinions of Miss World, protest activists' and progressive columnists' voices in interviews and columns seemed to reflect the shrill, arbitrary, and self-serving interests of an outnumbered minority. Interviews with Prof. Nanjundaswamy of the farmer's group, Sudha Sitaraman and N. Ramesh of the People's Democratic Forum, and Brinda Karat and Subashini of the All India Democratic Women's Association offering critiques of Miss World as one more elitist symbol of globalization, an economic process that favored the accumulation of wealth among the urban middle-classes seemed to clash impotently with the views of busy working people who had little time to squander on violent and uncouth protests. Measured against the empiricist rhetoric of the numerical gaze (transparent and neutral purveyor of knowledge) that projected the inexorable weight of the average woman's consent, feminists' writings (Ammu Joseph, Visa Ravindran, and Kalpana Sharma) on the commodification of Indian women's subjectivity, racist and classist beauty standards, and eating disorders transmuted into futile activist propaganda. Wedged between survey data in the newspaper's layout and constrained by the ideological thrust of objective numbers that resuscitated "popular" sentiment of support for Miss World, protesters' "babble" receded into the netherworld of antiquity.

Within the week, two other newspapers also leaped into the public opinion arena with their own survey research. Eager to distinguish their news product as different from the Times of India's poll that emphasized adult women, competing newspapers staked out their command of new turf in the modern race for counting bodies and minds. The Indian Express brandished numbers that showed surprising support for international pageants among older citizens and the Deccan Herald's arithmetic proved that young, college-age men and women did not empathize with the protesters. Shedding light on the ways in which news rearticulates modes of knowledge production that emerge from corporate culture and the public policy process, the editor of Deccan Herald's special weekend features argued, "That was a hot moment to do a survey that readers could really believe. We had a duty to set the record straight. What better way to do it than to invest time and money in our own scientific poll." Outdoing the Herald and the Express, the Times of India then returned with a much more spectacular enumerative strategy of news creation, a purportedly feminist project that trafficked loudly in the facile version of liberal feminism that has seeped into Indian film and women's magazines. The newspaper launched an informal survey of women and men celebrities to discover their "educated and intelligent" opinions on the impact of global pageants and beauty culture on Indian women's lives. Photographs, interviews, and articles illuminating celebrities' endorsement of Miss World spilled into the editorial and front pages simultaneously as news of the High Court's decisions (ABCL was ordered to pay for state security and hold the swimsuit contest outside of India), activists' plans to intensify campaigns, and Bachchan's fervent appeals for peace began to circulate in the public sphere,

Maneuvered into the modern machinery of celebrity culture with its idols and hungry devotees, Miss World was escorted into Times of India's front pages by a riveting sample of the rich and the famous. A panoply of local and national celebrities, carefully chosen to represent the modern and the traditional, the conservative and the liberal certified that Miss World was a safe, healthy, and harmless import to India. Former beauty queens (Sandhya Chib, Aishwarya Rai), magazine editors and journalists (Ramjee Chandran, Sathya Saran, V. N. Subba Rao), classical artists and performers (Suma Sudhindra, Vani Ganapathy, Gangubai Hangal, Mahesh Dattani), ethnic fashion designers (Sujit Mukherjee, Prasad Bidappa), and film and television actors/creative professionals (Suman Ranganathan, Shabana Azmi, Waheeda Rehman, Mohena Singh) defended Miss World. Demolishing the conservative critique of international pageants as rituals of cultural imperialism, some celebrities stitched the global Miss World into the local fabric of Indian history and tradition. As these persuasive interlocutors suggested, India's artistic appreciation for the corporal elements of feminine beauty was inscribed in Hindu myths and stories and etched into her ancient cave and temple sculptures, which offered a sumptuous archive of idealized female bodies. One former Miss India, Roopa Sathyan, accorded a prime position in the upper half of the front page, declared the protests against Miss World to be a travesty against "athithi seva," traditions of Indian hospitality that prescribed a courteous and effusive welcome for "guests" (founders and contestants). Eclipsed by celebrity glamour and the incontrovertible solidity of polling data that sketched unquestioning acceptance of new paradigms of modernity, protesters morphed into intransigent cultural others whose voices were isolated from, incompatible with, and marginal to the vicissitudes of inevitable progress.

What exclusionary practices that struck at the heart of feminist protests did the Times of India's inclusionary myths of "democratic surveys" mask? Madhu Bhushan, an activist from the feminist organization Vimochana, remarked that the Times of India's decision to juxtapose activist interviews and essays with survey data took them by surprise, "If we had known well ahead about these grand surveys that would overwhelm our voices, we might have offered opinions that could have exposed problems with the media's recent obsession with polling." Inspired by local economist Vinod Vyasulu's writings, feminists' publicity materials elaborated the disadvantages of globalization for the state's lower middle-class, working-class and poor women, constituencies that have been pushed relentlessly to the periphery in India's recent alignment with the economic order of globalization. For instance, even in the supposedly "open" arena of Bangalore's high tech industry, a "modern" business whose leaders vowed to nourish the rise of a qualified meritocracy by exorcising hierarchical ghosts of tradition (caste, religion, feudalism, and nepotism), middle- and upper-class men and women occupy managerial, design, and creative positions while lower-class women work predominantly as data entry operators and programmers. Reproducing class inequality, urban middle-class women entrepreneurs manage scores of beauty parlors in their homes while migrant rural women, flocking to the city with aspirations of gaining class mobility in the beauty industry, find themselves trapped and exploited as low-paid beauty workers (along the axis of gender, both classes of women bear the burden of childcare and domesticity). Scrutinizing the media's use of surveys to perpetuate a classist notion of normativity, the feminist leader of Mahila Jagruthi commented, "English-language surveys executed on the telephone, a luxury in a nation where thousands struggle for basic needs and less than 10 percent of the population can speak and write fluently in English is no less than a mockery of the democratic process." In the midst of deafening silence in the mainstream public sphere on the implications of globalization for India's poor, the modern "industrialization of opinionation" in the news media illustrates the hegemonic "emptiness of the concept of opinion," that is, the deployment of ill-informed consent by dominant forces as a prophylactic against moral accountability (Stabile, 2001, p. 265).

Not all media advocates for women's causes suffered the punishment of marginality in the Times of India's news on Miss World. Noted left-leaning Bollywood film actor and anti-poverty activist Shabana Azmi, who had spearheaded campaigns against real estate projects that threatened to displace Mumbai's street squatters, made the front page of the newspaper in late October for her candid assessment of protests against Miss World. Visiting Bangalore, soon after she received a Chicago Film Festival award for her performance in the acclaimed international film Fire, Azmi distanced her brand of activism from the embarrassingly violent "outbursts" in Bangalore that did not "augur well for a country that calls itself a mature democracy" (Rao, 1996, p. 1). Registering a significant shift in her opinions of beauty pageants, performances that she used to disavow for their elitist frivolity, Azmi declared that she no longer held the same view because the international beauty queen now professed a "deep commitment towards society" by embracing her role as global ambassador of charitable causes. Reverberating through Business World editor Dillip Thakore's column (a regular weekly feature in the Times of India), which dismissed women protesters as unlikely to "qualify for even the first round of a local beauty contest," Azmi's praise for beauty pageants' sponsorship of charities reappeared as the sine qua non that elevated Miss World from being a sexist parade of women's bodies to a spectacular site for corporations to exhibit their responsible citizenship.

Publicized as "Beauty with a purpose," not just "Beauty, skin deep" in ABCL's press releases, Miss World was presented to the news media as a compelling case for the enormous potential of modern private enterprise, which unlike the slow-paced and fossilized bureaucracy of the state, to hasten the reduction of gender and class inequality in the Third World. Engaging in "strategic philanthropy," a pervasive guerilla warfare tactic that implies patronage of the dispossessed to smuggle in media images of corporations as magnanimous global citizens, has today become a necessity to inoculate consumers from journalists' and activists' charges of labor exploitation and excessive profit-making. As Carol Stabile (2000) argues in her case study of Nike's global ascent, corporate benevolence towards the "unfortunate" often becomes a marketing tool to persuade local and global audiences that consumption, not boycott, critique, protest, or unionization, is an ideal means to experience their identities as liberal, caring, and concerned citizens. Maximizing a return on corporate investments (ROI) in community philanthropy, however, demands the shrewd mobilization of public sympathy for largely uncontroversial causes that tap the sympathies of a large consumer base by enabling the manufacture of media spectacles. Hence, sponsorship of a social ill or charity has to hold the promise of generating media images that can insert the corporation into meta-narratives of wholesome family, mythic individualism, and therapeutic motifs of healing and recovery. The ubiquitous media discourse on domestic violence in the First World, the "feminist" poster child that Revlon, Lifetime TV, and Johnson & Johnson readily adopted for its spectacular elements (fragile femininity, besieged motherhood, menacing weaponry, and deranged masculinity) illuminates the magnetic appeal that specific tales of redemption hold for audiences. In this context, widespread global corporate endorsement of local children's causes must be seen as more than a merely harmonious, reciprocal relationship between business and community. Emulating the global Mattel company, which has yoked the girl child, a captivating subject of pity in missionary and United Nations' discourse, as its ventriloquist mascot of charity, Miss World's founders decided to allocate 30 percent of the pageant's profits to the "handicapped Third World child," a recipient of medical and financial assistance from the National Spastics Society of India. The pageant's publicity materials represented the benevolent outreach of Miss World's fraternal unity of global and local capital as a timely and hygienic alternative to the myopia and corruption that plagued state agencies' efforts to rehabilitate India's disabled children.

The plugging of Miss World into the voyeuristic spectacle of the hypervulnerable body, an ideal resource for platitudinal discourses of salvation, took place in the Times of India's front pages and on Bangalore's local prime-time television news. Simultaneously as news of some public sympathy for protesters and film star Rajkumar's rejection of Bachchan's invitation to be a judge in the pageant began to trickle in, stories with extravagant headlines of praise for Miss World—Indian cricketers applaud Miss World for support of Spastics Society, Nobody argues about value of children: Eric Morley, and Amina Hassan, Director of Spastics Society thanks Bachchan and Morleys—scattered the front pages. Invoking the color-blind, yet colorful, and race-effacing "feel good" logic of First World narratives of rainbow multiculturalism (Mukherjee, 2002), Miss World founder Eric Morley's voice in the Times of India argued for the universal value of the world's fragile "blue or purple" children whose welfare could not be subjected to the vagaries of special interest groups' suspect motives. Bursting into tailored visibility in the Times of India while undermining feminist critiques of global capitalism's ideologies of equality and social justice, the Indian child's poverty and disability became sartorial outer garments that cloaked Miss World in the rhetoric of child empowerment and human rights. Front-page news on Miss World that was reminiscent of public health discourse described ongoing medical research on cerebral palsy, resources for disabled children's parents, outreach programs, and hospice care. These hard news articles offered an informational counterpoint to soft news photos that fixed Miss World contestants in nurturing poses of maternal affection. Five large images portrayed young, beautiful women bending down toward, gazing into the eyes of, and gently smiling at disabled children, who were sometimes seated in wheelchairs. Maya Sharma of STAR News led the evening news on November 11 with a feature "Blitz of glitz for Bangalore's kids' that recorded Miss World contestants' arrival at a children's party where the proceeds from selling their gifts would benefit the Spastics Society. A photograph of Miss World founder Julia Morley holding a disabled child in her lap served as the visual prop for a news story on poor Indian citizens' deplorable access to mental health services.

The Times of India's spectacle of global beauty queens, solicitously knitted together with the local rescue of disabled childhood, is an example of modern feminine power that ranges from saucy Spice girls and demure pop divas to ferocious martial arts experts and brave foreign correspondents. Narratives of empowered women "changing the world" or transgressing gender boundaries mediate the tensions and contradictions between femininity and feminism, center and periphery, selfish individualism and selfless public service. As Hinds and Stacey (2001) observe, the shift in representations of feminism from the "monstrous outsiders of the 1960s" to the "incorporated Ms of the 1990s" has ushered in public sphere images of women who epitomize the combination of "well-worn patriarchal stereotypes …with a post-Thatcherite self-help assertiveness and individualism" (p.

155). Ironically, the Times of India's spectacular imaging of Miss World's pop feminism, a vision of attractive women tending to children in India, the "jewel in the crown" of the colonial empire, also draws its semiotic strength from powerful discourses of imperial white femininity saving the sick, elderly, and poor. The specter of the poised, gentle, and beautiful Princess Diana, an ambassador of Britain's reconfigured kinder post-imperial façade, embracing the black child "victim" of land mines shadows the maternal warmth of the globe-trotting beauty queen. As the emblem of a caring aristocracy's redemptive qualities, the figure of Diana, as Hinds and Stacey (2002) write, "promised a return to a lost utopian plenitude where social difference and inequality evaporate at the touch of the 'people's princess'" (p. 165). Replacing religious mythologies of miraculous healing with modern discourses of secular beauty queens "touching" the afflicted and the unfortunate, the Times of India's representations ultimately masked the invidious paradox of Miss World, a contest that accords a high status to the perfect body, kneaded and groomed to meet White standards of beauty, becoming the ventriloquist voice of a disabled Third World child. Pointing to the insidious ways in which the virus of spectacle fever can infect activist agendas, soon after the Times of India published stories of beauty contestants bestowing their kindness on disabled children, the Akhil Bharathiya Vidya Parishad (students' union) organized a protest march of activists pushing children in wheelchairs holding anti-Miss World banners.

Finally, in mapping consent for and dissent against Miss World, the Times of India's representations relied on a resilient ideological device of modernity, the binary, a conceptual inheritance of the Enlightenment that was disseminated among Europe's colonies in Asia and Africa long before the recent arrival of globalization. Driving standards of objectivity in modern journalistic practice, the binary seeps into media coverage of controversial issues despite the profession's initiation of shifts and accommodations to overcome the constraints of dyadic news frames. Oscillating between the bountiful aesthetic temptations of globalization, captured in Miss World's heady combination of state power, celebrity culture, and feminine beauty, and religious right-wing factions' almost carnivalesque forms of protest, the Times of India's news coverage muted the feminist voice that offered a much less newsworthy critique—global and local capital's forceful reworking of Indian women's subjectivity into a lucrative commodity, a consumer-driven process that could only exacerbate class and gender differences in an already unequal society. On the macro-level, the newspaper published almost twice as many articles and photos of conservative politicians and special-interest groups as they did of

Bangalore's feminist organizations and the All India Democratic Women's Association. Among the protest leaders whose individual voices penetrated the "global babble" of Miss World, Kina Narayana Sashikala, the conservative Mahila Jagran Samiti activist, captured maximum editorial space.

Underscoring the organizing power of the binary in news content, published interviews with state officials and celebrities typically began with Times of India reporters' probing questions on the conservative critique of Miss World as a ritual that degraded Indian women's traditional honor and morality. Signaling the newspaper's feeble attempt to include other protest agendas, one routinely phrased question on the economic impact of multinationals made its way right at the end of some interviews. Claiming to represent the average woman's interests, popular Times of India columnist Bachi Karkaria insisted that "Women Like Us," normal Indian women (read middle-class) who liked actor Hugh Grant, healthy exercise, and political news, knew how to resist commercial culture without devouring "men for dinner." While feminists' staging of a theatrical event in Bangalore's Cubbon Park, a mock pageant where three women were crowned as "Miss Poverty, Miss Landless, and Miss Homeless" gained some publicity, conservative activist Sashikala's controversial threat to orchestrate a group suicide at the stadium during the live performance of Miss World upstaged dramatically feminists' protest campaign. Covering Sashikala's suicide threat, CNN and ABC's World news consolidated further the regime of the binary, even as they carelessly perpetuated gross mis-identification of protesters in the global public sphere. CNN's correspondent Anita Pratap reported mistakenly that Sashikala, "one feminist leader," who had vowed to burn herself, was a poster child for Indian feminists' intense animosity towards Miss World as a symbol of cultural imperialism.

Spectacles of gender in postcolonial India: Colonial cadavers and market metaphors

Why did a beauty pageant, a ritual that currently gains little more than routine media coverage in the West, become the centerpiece of the Times of India's news representations for over two months? Crystallizing numerous acquaintances' visceral responses to my research on Miss World in the Times of India, a colleague in the United States remarked, "All this fuss about a beauty pageant! No one cares about them here anymore." Although Banet-Weiser (1999), a feminist critic of the Miss America contest, would point out that pageants in the United States continue to be profoundly political sites (as in the Jon-Benet Ramsey case) for the public enactment of family values, race relations, and multiculturalism, my colleague's comment also the fluid and amorphous character of "traveling" global culture that undergoes local translation in the historical spaces of specific nations. Hence, high culture in one context transforms into low culture in another and celebrated rituals in one region may incarnate as trivial and inconsequential in others. Does the spectacle of Miss World in India narrate yet another tale of discarded First World modernity's delayed arrival in the Third World? Is the history of feminist protest recycling itself as knee-jerk mimicry in the periphery three decades after the center produced the mythological feminist bra burner of the 1968 Miss America pageant? Far from revealing the Times of India's attempts to satisfy passive local readers' appetite for outdated First World rituals or Indian feminists' abject failure to fashion autonomous discourse, the Miss World controversy captures the enduring cultural purchase and semiotic tenacity of gender in constituting spectacles of nation, tradition, and modernity in India's postcolonial public sphere. Not unlike the popular 2001 Bollywood film Lagaan (a David-versus-Goliath narrative of "illiterate" Indian village men's victory over the British in a cricket match), which yoked nationalism's indestructible spirit to the athletic power of rugged and rustic Indian masculinity, the Times of India deployed the pencil of cosmopolitan femininity as an instrument to sketch the contours of modernity. Echoing the tenor of nineteenth century male colonial and nationalist discourses that harnessed European and "native" womanhood as ideological vehicles to debate the effects of Western imperialism on national culture (Grewal, 1996, Kandiyoti, 1991; Mani, 1991), the newspaper's rendering of smiling beauty queens, liberated celebrity women, violent women activists, and approving middle-class women's enthusiasm for Miss World once again elaborated the synechdochic relationship between femininity and other social constructs such as nationalism, development, and modernity (Mankekar, 1997).

Why did the Times of India pay less attention to the feminist campaign against Miss World? The Indian newspaper industry, contrary to the evidence unearthed in the case of Miss World, has shown a sustained record of sympathy for the women's movement (Balasubrahmanyan, 1988; Joseph & Sharma, 1994). Contrasting the regressive overtones of television's aggressive modern women with the more progressive historical legacy of the Indian press, Misra & Roychowdhury (1997) argue that almost all legislative reforms and "major women's rights campaigns have been waged primarily" through the press (p. 248). Mobilizing public support for such feminist causes as dowry deaths, female infanticide, domestic violence, and rampant alcoholism among poor men over the past four decades, the English-language press has proven to be a strategic ally of urban feminist activists. While news representations of residual "traditional" oppressions evoke middle-class reformist sympathy for the spectacularly "illiterate" and "downtrodden," the feminist critique of Miss World as yet another manifestation of globalization's exclusion of poor Indian women lacked the captivating mythology of linear narratives with victims/villains and rescue/happy ending that speak eloquently to middle-class reporters' sense of social injustice. For instance, unlike feminists' critiques of market and labor politics, ABCL's support for the Spastic Society enabled precisely such an enduring template of story telling. Times of India photos and stories that cast the Morleys and ABCL as protectors of the nation's innocent children drew its magnetic force from recent public memory of the 1991 Ameena controversy, a battle that erupted in the news when the Indian state and community elites fought for custody of Ameena, a young Muslim girl, who was rescued from the "clutches" of a "villainous" elderly Arab man. Deconstructing news narratives on Ameena's predicament, Mankekar (1997) observes that the state, activists, and religious leaders participated in spectacular discourses of victimology that constructed endangered childhood as the quintessential moral crisis for the postcolonial nation.

Analyzing feminists' campaign literature and newspapers' largely positive coverage of sex selective abortion from 1986 to 1989, Luthra (1999) writes that the Indian press comfortably accommodated the feminist framework because the termination of female fetuses was a social problem that remained well within the boundaries of "liberal middle- and upper-class welfarist definitions of women's upliftment, without challenging caste or class divisions directly, and without questioning the role of the state in women's lives" (p. 18). However, as Luthra notes, even though the press seemed willing to amplify feminists' critiques of the ways in which archaic Hindu traditions fueled poor citizens' sexist practices of gender discrimination, newspapers ignored or attenuated activists' sophisticated indictment of capitalism and consumer modernity as equally culpable agents in causing the rise of female foeticide. Denouncing the feminist campaign against Miss World as a self-serving protest that signaled the decay of Bangalore's feminist movement, one Times of India reporter remarked, "I don't get it. These women have shifted from the real problems affecting a majority of Indian women to anorexia. They're just imitating American feminists now." While some of the feminist protest literature on Miss World did explain the impact of beauty culture on eating disorders, most posters, press releases, and speeches focused on the classist nexus between the Indian state and global/local capitalist entities. Indian newspapers' crusading zeal against dowry deaths, rape, and female infanticide, rather than the institution of patriarchy or modern capitalism, enables the industry to perform as a progressive "watchdog" without threatening the system reproduces the ideological mold of nineteenth century nationalist discourse in colonial India. Joining hands with British architects of colonial modernity in their project of civilization for the colonies, upper-caste Hindu male reformers fought tirelessly to outlaw widow burning, child marriage, and polygamy, however, the impulse to eradicate such spectacular practices of women's horrific oppression left intact the structures and ideologies of caste, class, and gender that produce discrimination in the first place (Kandiyoti, 1991).

Tracking the purportedly irreversible course of consumer modernity and its ability to erase local barriers of region and caste, the survey as a methodology of news production in postcolonial India continues to project the economic power of globalization's numerical gaze. Following the Times of India's investment in a public opinion survey on Miss World in 1996, the Telegraph newspaper published a survey headlined "Who am I, women speak out" in March 1998 that claimed to index the progressiveness of Indian cities by measuring women's positions on careers, marriage, and childcare. Jubilantly announcing that women in Calcutta scored the highest points, unlike the backward women in Chennai, the survey claimed that some Indian women were racing towards modernity at a quicker pace than others. The ascent of polling as news strategy in the era of globalization in India, although not identical by any means, echoes the ways in which the British colonial administration deployed surveys to domesticate and translate the vast heterogeneity of India into a language that would be amenable to the priorities of empire building. Charting the genealogy of the number in the administrative arena of the colonial bureaucracy, Appadurai (1996) sketches the imaginative and practical role that "numbers, measurement, and quantification" played in the exercise of power over the colonies. Confounded by the vast landscape of India's exotic peoples, detailed surveys documenting India's cultural and geographic diversity aided the transformation of the colonial experience into terms "graspable in the metropolis" (p. 126). Emphasizing the colonial crafting of the survey as an instrument of discipline and surveillance rather than just a utilitarian tool of data collection, Appadurai writes, "…by the end of the eighteenth century, number, like landscape, heritage, and the people had become part of the language of the British political imagination, and the idea had become firmly implanted that a powerful state could not survive without making enumeration a central technique of social control" (p. 117).

Finally, this analysis of the Times of India's news regime must also be situated in the economic context of the newspaper's ownership and the competitive challenges of increasing print media circulation in the media saturated environment of Bangalore, a city that has four English-language and two Kannada newspapers. The Times of India newspaper chain is a subsidiary of Bennett-Coleman, a media conglomerate owned by the Jain family, which manages eight publications and has interests in jute, steel, cement, and shipping industries. Bennett-Coleman produces *Femina*, an upscale women's magazine that sponsors the annual Miss India beauty contest, and the *Economic Times*, a mainstream financial newspaper that caters to the upwardly mobile business and social elite; the goals and priorities of these sister publications may have exerted some influence on the newspaper's representations of ABCL and protest groups. Differing slightly from the *Times of India*, the *Hindu* newspaper and *Frontline* magazine, owned by N. Ram, a media industry leader known for his socialist leanings, carried a few negative critiques of ABCL, Miss World, and the effects of globalization on gender and economic inequality. As the youngest resident on Bangalore's news block, the *Times of India*'s upper-management had also decided that the newspaper would strategically reach out to younger audiences, a vulnerable market whose fluctuating brand loyalties were more easily maneuverable than older audiences with established reading preferences. Citing market research, the newspaper's editor argued that Bangalore's growing middle-class urban youth market possessed enormous earning potential in the city's burgeoning climate of high technology and multinational investments. An international pageant's visual bait of feminine modernity, when splashed with color on the front pages, held the dual promise of luring Bangalore's young men *and* women to the newspaper.

ABCL's successful positioning in the *Times of India* also speaks to the growing professionalization of the corporate public relations industry, an indispensable companion of late capitalism that has received far less attention from cultural studies than advertising, its much more noisy and flashy sibling. Since the late eighties, with the arrival of multinationals "wishing to cultivate good feelings among the locals" and the incursions of numerous global affiliates and local agencies like Ketchum, Ogilvy and Mather, Good Relations, Genesis PR, and Mudra Diverisfied, industry insiders claim that the "Indian PR industry is on the threshold of a major explosion" (Greenberg, 1996). During the height of anti-globalization protest in Bangalore in October and November 1996, over 200 ABCL press releases reached *Times of India*, *Hindu*, and *Deccan Herald* reporters. In contrast to feminist activists' sporadic and long typewritten essays photocopied on dull, coarse yellow paper in a monotonous format, ABCL's slick releases, crafted by Clia Public Relations, were produced on thick, white expensive paper that sported Miss World sponsor Godrej's bold yellow, blue, and green logo of an apsara (heavenly dancer). ABCL's releases were short, attractively laid out, and frequently hand delivered in folders that included tips for stories, photographs, and lists of newsworthy candidates for media interviews. Explaining the new challenges that Indian reporters faced since economic liberalization, feminist writer Parvathi Menon, who wrote a cover story on the beauty business for Frontline, remarked, "We know how to be vigilant about government corruption, but we're not trained on how to treat corporate speak. Two decades ago, journalists believed that the only place for the private sector was advertising. The flurry of press releases has caught us off guard." Capturing the spirit of Menon's observations on journalists' inexperience in handling the seductive products of the public relations machinery, a 1994 issue of Sunday magazine described a recent phenomenon that was puzzling to many reporters—well-dressed, smiling visitors (not the usual "office boy" who is low on the corporate totem pole) who circulated announcements about upcoming events and treated reporters with obsequious respect.

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EFF-089 (1/2003)